# *Spiritual Bondage and Freedom.*

OR, A

# TREATISE

Containing the Substance of several

# SERMONS

Preached on that Subject from

## *JOHN* VIII. 36.

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*By the late Reverend Mr.* NATHANAEL BALL, M. A. *Late Pastor of* Barley *in* Hartfordshire.

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Isa. 61. 1. *The Lord hath sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.*

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*To the Right Honourable and truly Vertuous, the Lady* Archer, *of* Coopersail *in* Essex.

*Madam!*

IT is too notorious, That the most usual pretensions of Epistles *Dedicatory*, are patronage from, and their real Scope flatteries of the Persons to whom they are directed. For the former, 'tis an apparent vanity; in that a Worthy Work needs it not, and an Unworthy neither deserves, nor is capable of it. For the latter, as it ill becomes the entrance of so serious and searching a Subject, as that

of this Book, and the impartial ſimplicity of a Miniſter of Divine Grace and Truth: So I am confident, it would be entertained by your Ladiſhip with diſtaſte and contempt. *Madam*, To ſay my errand in ſhort, I do but pay to your Ladiſhip the Legacy of my reverend Brother, and your dear Friend in, and Miniſter from the Lord Jeſus, who is now at everlaſting reſt; A Legacy worthy his bequeathing, and your Ladiſhips accepting. Yet it is not only a Legacy of Love, but alſo a Debt of Juſtice, both which Obligations he was not inſenſible of, when he deſigned and ordered the offering of this excellent Service more peculiarly to your Ladiſhip, than to any other. You were not ſo little acquainted with

him, as not to know him to be a Perſon immured in his Study, and ſtrongly (I wiſh, I could not ſay too ſtrongly) inclined to ſolitude and privacy. Otherwiſe, his large Talents of Grace, and Miniſterial Abilities, might have rendred him conſpicuous, and met with very large acknowledgments from the truly godly and intelligent, not only to himſelf alive, but to his Pious and Deſolate Widow, and his Children, after his Deceaſe. *Madam*, I muſt beg your pardon (if it be a fault), that I omit not to confirm what I ſaid of the Juſtice of this Dedication; for what can be more juſt, than to render thoſe labours (next to Gods) primarily to your Service, who did ſo bountifully miniſter to the reve-

rend Authors subsistence in his greatest straits, equally to, if not beyond any other mortal; so that this work is in no small respects your own, and a reaping the blessing you have sowed. But to make it your own beyond the interest a meer Dedication can give you, a sensible remembrance of the *Spiritual Bondage*, and a gracious experience of the *Spiritual Freedom* treated of in this excellent Discourse, will exceedingly conduce.

*Madam*, I shall not undertake the unnecessary task of commending the Book, it being commendation enough to its self, where it meets with a Spiritual and Judicious taste. Only I shall say, That the Author speaks like

one

one that hath felt and experienced what he ſpeaks, in his own Soul. I ſhall add no farther, only commend you to God, and to the word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are ſanctified; and ſubſcribe my ſelf,

*Your Ladiſhips*

*Humble Servant,*

*and an unworthy Miniſter*

*of the Goſpel,*

JOHN FALDO.

*shall be captivated unto the obedience of his Truth. These Worthies of Christ have been very careful to avoid Scandals, and giving Offence, that their Ministry might not be justly blamed.*

*Hence in all things they have approved themselves as the Ministers of God, in much Patience and Affliction, in Necessities and Distresses, in Stripes and Imprisonments, in tossings to and fro, and in labours, in watchings and fastings, by pureness, by knowledg, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the Power of God, by the armour of Righteousness on the right hand, and on the left; by honour and dishonour, by evil report, and good report; as deceivers and yet true; as unknown, and yet well-known; as dying yet living [even to a miracle]; as chastened and not killed; persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed; being reviled, they bless; being defamed, they intreat; they bless and curse not.*

*Touching the Reverend and Blessed Author of this Book; it will not be unacceptable to give some short Account of him, who was an Interpreter, one of a thousand, an able and faithful Minister of the* New-Testament, *not*

*not of the letter, but of the Spirit; a Miniſter, as of great abilities, ſo of great ſucceſs in his Miniſtry. The Lord himſelf hath erected Monuments to his dead Saints, and took care for the embalming their memories unto poſterity. Whileſt the name of the wicked doth rot, the memory of the juſt ſhall be bleſſed. Whileſt the ungodly are forgotten, or if remembred, 'tis with a note of Infamy; as,* This is that Ahaz! *This* is Jeroboam that made Iſrael to ſin! *the righteous are had in everlaſting remembrance: Remember them which have the rule over you, who have ſpoken to you the word of God, whoſe faith follow; conſidering the end of their converſation.*

*This holy man of God,* Mr. Nathanael Ball, *was born in the year* 1623. *at* Pitminſter *near* Taunton Dean, *in the County of* Sommerſet. *His Parents were godly, and of the number of them who in thoſe days were nick-named Puritans. They gave him Religious Education; he received it from their inſtructions and examples. Parents are either the beſt or worſt Copies to their Children; none can do more either to hinder or further their Childrens Converſion. They have the greateſt advantages for the ſowing Seeds of Grace in*

*their*

very many were convinced and converted by him. He seldom spread the Net of the Gospel, but this Fisherman of Souls caught some Soul or other for Christ. He not only preached publickly, but visited the Families of his Congregation, particularly examining and instructing the ignorant in private, and was never satisfied till he had wrought upon them a deep and awakened sence and feeling of their woful estate by nature, the necessity of closing with the offers of Salvation tendred by Christ Jesus. He left powerful impressions upon their consciences (which stuck as so many daggers in their hearts) of the reality of things Invisible, That there is a God and Devil, a Heaven and Hell; That they had precious and immortal Souls, which must be savd or damnd; and that as God was merciful, so also was he a just and terrible God, that would by no means acquit the guilty, and that it was impossible for them to escape the damnation of Hell, if they did neglect so great Salvation, as was now offered them in this day of their Visitation. He put all Masters of Families in their own Persons upon the performance of Family-Duties, of prayer and reading the Scriptures, of Singing and Catechizing, that so their Families might be

Bethels,

Bethels, *not* Bethavens; *little Churches of God, not Synagogues of the Devil. And when some objected their want of gifts for prayer; he gave them such Directions and Instructions both for matter and manner, that in a short time the blessed fruits and effects thereof was very visible; many being able to pour out their Souls in prayer unto God with proper Words, and melting Affections. He always charged them to be upon their knees in prayer; Gods familarity with us, should not make us saucy towards him, but to ingage us to keep our distance, and to serve him with a more holy fear, and filial reverence. The Lord gave him a large seal unto his Ministry; in so much that he was the Spritual Father of many, whom he begat to Christ in the Gospel.*

*When he altered his condition, he sought and found a meet help for him every way; a neighbour Ministers Daughter, to whom he was Married, and with whom he lived Religiously and comfortably to his dying day, and the blessing of God was upon his Marriage, giving him, by his vertuous Wife, ten Sons and three Daughters. She is now left a desolate Widow, like the chast* Turtle *mourning for the loss of her Mate, and her Children Orphans; but he laid up for them Treasure in*

*Heaven,*

*Heaven, a stock of prayers to the God hearing prayer, and they have the Promises. God is the Husband and Judg of his Widow, and Father to the fatherless, out of his holy Habitation; their Fathers God will be their God, and his seed will be blessed after him: Leave thy Fatherless children unto me, and let thy Widows put their trust in me, saith the Lord.*

*In the government of his Family, he was very exact, and shewed a rare example of piety to his whole Family. He began with God first in his own closet, and suffered none under his roof to live without secret prayer. When it was a convenient time for the whole house to meet together, he came from his Study, and summoning them to Duty, he expounded one or two Chapters, and examined his Children and Servants what they did remember, encouraging the diligent, reproving the negligent; which being done he called upon God for them, and with them. In prayer he was always fervent, vehemently wrestling with the Lord for his blessing. In his daily prayers, he begged hard for Mercy for King and Kingdom, for Church and State; he sought the prosperity of* Zion *earnestly, and would not brook a denial. Duty being ended, he retired shortly*

*upon*

upon it into his Study, where he commonly abode till Dinner; and when he crav'd a bleſſing upon his meat, it was in the preſence of his whole Family: he was very ſparing in his diet, and at Table ever turning his diſcourſe Heavenwards, and would lead his gueſts and family from their mercies to the God of Mercies. At every meal he preached as it were a ſhort Sermon; and Thanks being returned unto God, he haſtned again into his Study; allowing himſelf no recreation, but what aroſe from reading, praying and inſtructing others. He ſpent moſt of his time in ſtudying the Scriptures, ſearching out the Mind and Will God in them; Well knowing, that all humane writings had their defects, but the Book of God was perfect and infallible. He common-plac'd all his reading; this was a ſtore-houſe for preſent and after uſes. At night he carefully kept good hours for Evening-prayer, ſo that his family did not ſerve God between ſleeping and waking. A Chapter being read, and prayer offered up unto the Lord, he withdrew himſelf again into his Study; where, as he began, ſo he cloſed the day with ſecret Devotion. When he lay down in his bed, it was with ſome heavenly diſcourſes, which took up his time till he fell aſleep. His firſt thoughts in the morn-

*ing were of God. His meditations before his uprising, were improved heavenward. He rose early, and would discourse in the day, how his reins instructed him in the night season. 'Tis a thousand pities, that so many precious thoughts as Gods Saints have of God, should be lost, and not recorded. A godly Gentleman of the* Innet Temple, *told a Reverend Minister, that he would not lose his morning-thoughts of God, for all his worldly estate, which yet was a very fair and great one.*

*But his observation of the Lords day was most strict and religious. The fourth Commandment is the hedg and mound about the whole Law. Break down this, and you violate all the rest. The* Jews *stiled the sabbath the* Bride of the Synagogue. *This holy man of God decked himself up for it, as a Bridegroom to meet his Bride. The Sabbath was his delight, and he was exceeding careful, not only in his own person, but that all in his family and under his charge, should sanctifie it unto the Lord. He had no worldly business, no worldly discourses on that day; but he and his whole houshold spent the whole day in the Service of God. Blessed is the man that doth this, and the son of man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it. In his house, 'twas the Lords day indeed, the Queen of daies, all his children, servants, and whoso lodged within his*

*gates,*

gates, were wholly taken up in reading, hearing, repeating, meditating, praying, and singing of Psalms that day. On the Sabbath evenings he examined his childrens & servants proficiency by the Sabbath-ordinances, and laboured mightily to awaken their consciences, and to put them upon early seeking of God.

He was very communicative of his knowledg. As a Fountain freely yields its water, and the field its corn, and the garden herbs for the use of man; so did his heart and tongue disperse abroad his spiritual gifts and experiences to the edification of others. He would talk with any child or servant, that so he might drop into them something of the mystery of godliness. Frequently would he take his younger children into his closet, and offer up particular supplications for them; he would not indulge any of them in a sinful action. 'Twas his judgment, that a Father might wink at any thing, saving sin against God. Therefore in his use of the Rod he designed their good. He first convinced them of the dishonour they had done the Lord, the danger they had brought upon themselves; and professed that as God their heavenly Father had not, so neither had he any pleasure in chastising them; that sin being bound up in the heart of a child, 'twas the Lords Ordinance, that the rod of correction should drive it out; and therefore

*he always accompanied the rod with prayer that so they might have the spirit and blessing of the rod, and correction might be seconded with conversion, and crowned with universal reformation.*

*He seemed by his indulgence and kindness to his servants, a Father rather than a Master. He was very compassionate on their Souls, and pressed them powerfully to secure the main, their interest in Christ. And some of them have cause everlastingly to bless God, they came under his roof, and stood related to so pious and good a Master.*

*The tenderness of his conscience, and great zeal for the purity of Gospel-worship, kept him from conformity. Hereupon with some thousands of his brethren, he was slain by that fatal Axe, the Act of* Bartholomew-day. *O! when will the living God give them resurrection? Lord, revive thy work in the midst of our days, in the midst of judgment, remember mercy. These* Abels, *tho dead, are yet speaking. The Bush burns and is not consumed. Certainly God hath some great work for them, who tho sentenced unto death, are yet alive. We hope in the living God, who quickneth the dead, who hath delivered them from many and great deaths; we hope, I say, that he will yet deliver them from this death also.*

For

*For sometime after his silencing, Mr.* Ball *lived in the same Parish, where he had been formerly Minister; and when the* Oxford *Act came forth, he removed five Miles farther. Where he peaceably behaved himself, and won upon many of a different perswasion by his moderation, sweetness of deportment, and holy, and unblameable conversation. He bore a singular love to all that lookt heavenward, tho of a different perswasion from himself, & therefore kept up a brotherly and Christian correspondence with that worthy Conformist in whose Parish he lived. He judged it his duty to preach, and that necessity was laid upon him; a woun to him if he did not preach the Gospel. Herepon he neither could nor would be idle, but preached frequently, and studied to preach in such times and places, as were least offensive to authority. It grieved him to hear his spiritual children complain they wanted Bread, when he had it for them.*

*Very many reaped the fruit and benefit of his labours since he was outed his publick Ministry,* as Cambridg, Epping, & Bayford, *and other places to which he was related. He spent himself in doing good to Souls; for maintenance he relied upon that providence which feeds the fowls, and cloathes the Lillies, and was of blessed Mr.* Hierons *mind, That God*

*who*

*who feeds the Ravens, would not ſtarve his young Hierons. And indeed his numerous family were maintained to a miracle. He ſought not the world, but his God. He did his maſters work, truſting to his bounty for wages; and would often ſay, he never lived better than when he knew not how to live. He liv'd by faith upon Gods promiſes; committed his ways unto God, and had a firm perſwaſion that the Lord would provide for him and his, which was verified.*

*He kept a Diary of Gods providences to himſelf and family, of mercies and afflictions, of ſupports and deliverances. This quickned him unto thankfulneſs; theſe experiences ſtrengthned his faith, and made him abound in hope, in the Lord his God. When his goods were ſeized on for preaching contrary to Law, this holy man took that ſpoil patiently, and joyfully, knowing that he had a better and more enduring ſubſtance reſerved in the Heavens, and that thoſe loſſes ſuſtained for Chriſt and a good conſcience, would prove gains at laſt, and work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If he was concerned, it was for his enemies, whom he pitied from his Soul, and for whom he prayed, as his Lord and Maſter, that they might be forgiven, becauſe they knew not that they did the Devils work.* His

*His great labours in his Masters Vineyard, shortned his days, but drew him the nearer and sooner to his rest. In his sickness his patience was most exemplary, bearing his paine with a Christian fortitude, & resigning himself for life and death unto his Lords disposal. For him to live, was to glorifie Christ, & to die, gain. So he might be farther useful and serviceable in his Ministry, he was wellcontented with life; but to be dissolved and to be at home with Christ, being better for him, in case of unserviceableness this was earnestly desired by him. To such as visited him in his languishing, he gave serious counsels of providing in health for sickness, in life for death, in time for eternity. He was much in prayer for the afflicted Church of God, bitterly lamenting the case of* England; *mourning for those great sins committed in the midst of us, and trembling at the thoughts of those heavy Judgments hanging over our heads. He sadly and sorrowfully laid to heart the unnatural breaches among Protestants, the divisions of* Reuben, *the quarrels and enmities among* Joseph's *Brethren; especially, now the Canaanite was in the Land. He was grieved at the heart for the unbecoming lives of many Ministers, and of multitudes of professors of so pure a Religion, whose lives indeed*

are

*are a flat contradiction to it, and for whose abominations God would certainly visit (unless there were speedy, sincere, and extraordinary humbling and reforming) with seven worse plagues than ever. But the Lord took him from the evil to come, after he had languished for some time in a Consumption, and breathed ardently after Heaven and Glory. He was called upon as the Witnesses, to come up hither. He had long waited for his blessed charge, and that salvation he had believed, prayed and expected, the Lord his Master, whom he had faithfully served, put him into the possession of at last. He left this life for a better, this vale of tears for a paradise of joys, for rivers of everlasting pleasures, the eight day of* September, *and in the year of our Lord* 1681. *and the* 58th *year of his age.* Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.

# Spiritual Bondage AND FREEDOM.

John 8. 36.

*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

## CHAP. I.

*The Text opened: The Doctrine inferred thence. The first Branch of it handled.*

FOR the making of our passage clear to this Text, we must look back a little upon the foregoing Verses; where we shall see that Christ is a preaching to the people, and what the success of his preaching was. In his preaching, amongst other things, I would desire you specially to take notice of Two things that he delivers concerning himself; which I mention, because I would by no means have you to let them pass, because they are of great moment to your Souls. One is that in *ver.* 12. a very precious place; Christ was *sent to give light to the World, i. e.* to bring them out of that

darkneſs which they are in by nature. 'Tis juſt as if a man ſtood in ſome diſmal dark place, where he can ſee nothing, knows not where he is, nor whither to go, and one comes to him with a light, and if he does but follow it, it brings him into the open view of things: So Chriſt, thoſe that follow him, he leads them into the light of life, into the light of ſpiritual life, that he ſhall ſee ſpiritual things, which no man doth, or can, that does not follow Chriſt; and into the light of Eternal life, where, at laſt, he ſhall ſee, and be with God for ever. So that all that live without Chriſt, they live without light; they are dark men and women in their Souls. Another thing that Chriſt preaches to them, is in *ver.* 24. (the Lord open your hearts in the reading of it) *I ſaid therefore unto you, that ye ſhall die in your ſins.* Dying in ones ſins is the ſaddeſt death that a man can die: that perſon *dies to die.* As the children of God *die to live*, ſo theſe, they die to die again. When they die the natural death, they die the Eternal death; they die to be damned, to be ſeparated for ever from the Lord, as thoſe that he will never have any thing to do with more, but in a way of tormenting them for their living and dying in their ſins. And

theſe

theſe of all that die out of the World, are the perſons whoſe death is to be moſt lamented. If God takes away any of your Relations, or Friends, or Neighbours, if you have but good hopes that they died in Chriſt, 'tis comfortable; but this ſame *dying in ſin*, Oh! that's the terrible, that's the lamentable death: as you ſay of ſome perſons ſometimes that died in ſome horrible way, Oh! ſuch an one he came to a ſad end; ſo do all that die in their ſins. A ſad end, the Lord knows. One were better never to have been born, than to die ſuch a death. But I pray mark here, what is it that will bring people to ſuch a death? Why, ſays Chriſt, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* If ye abide Unbelievers, if you don't come to me, own me, give up your ſelves to me, as ſure as can be, ſaith he, this will be your caſe, ye *ſhall* dye in your ſins. There be ſome that die *to* their ſins; that's a good death; and all Gods Children dye ſo. There be ſome that die *in* their ſins; that's a ſad death, as you have heard, and all Reprobate Sinners die ſo. There be ſome that die *for* their ſins eternally, and ſuch are all they that die *in* them; and the way to die in them, and for them, is to live in them.

These, and such kind of things Christ is here preaching. I have but named that which I conceive to be most needful for you. Well, now what's the success of Christs preaching to his Hearers? Why, you may observe it was this; That of those that heard him, some were *complying*, and some were *cavilling*. The Lord grant that all of you may be of the first sort, and none of the second. Some were complying Hearers. This kind of Doctrine took upon their Souls, *v.* 30. *As he spake these words, many believed on him.* Oh that there might be such a presence and power of God in our Assembly here, that as we are speaking, you might be believing, applying, taking home the Truths of the Gospel, so as to be converted to Christ. Now these kind of Hearers Christ encourages, and bids them go on as they had begun, and they should have a Threefold Priviledg. The first of them is in *v.* 31. They should be Disciples *indeed*, not in name, and in shew only, but in reality: q. d. I'le own you for *sincere* ones, such as *Nathanael* was, concerning whom Christ said, *John* 1 48. *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.* You have some that do offer towards Christ, begin as if they would follow his Rules and Doctrine; but they don't *continue* in his Word; and so shew that

that they are not Diſciples *indeed*, none of the right kind of Profeſſors.

The other Two Priviledges which Chriſt ſaith theſe ſhall have, are in *v.* 32. 1. Ye ſhall know the Truth *i.e.* have experimental knowledg of the Truths of God. God and Chriſt would reveal themſelves further and further to them in the matters and myſteries of ſalvation: He promiſes inward and ſound illumination to them, that they ſhould have another manner of knowledg of ſpiritual things than they have who have nothing but what ſwims in the brain. 2. That the Truth which they ſhould have an underſtanding of, ſhould make them *free*; not like thoſe that abide in ſlavery and bondage; but they ſhould have a ſtate of *Freedom.*

Now amongſt theſe Hearers, ſome, as I ſaid, were *cavilling* Hearers. And this is the ſad ſucceſs that the Word hath upon ſome, that it ſets them but a cavilling at what is delivered. And thus the Goſpel is the ſavour of life to ſome, and the ſavour of death to others. Now the carnal and unbelieving Hearers take occaſion unjuſtly to cavil at Chriſt, from thoſe laſt words which he ſpake to his complying Hearers in the Text, *ſhall make you free.* As if they

ſhould ſay, Why then, pray what do you make of us? We perceive, that you count us Slaves, or Bond people. Your Diſciples and Followers ſhall be taken out of the company of ſuch as are in thraldom: why then be-like we are no *Freemen.* Here they thought they had a great advantage againſt Chriſt; ſee *v.* 33. *They anſwered him, We be Abrahams ſeed, and were never in bondage to any man: How ſayeſt thou, Ye ſhall be made free?* This that they ſaid was not true in the letter and as to the outward bondage (that they had *never been in bondage to any man*): for had they not been in bondage in *Egypt?* and in bondage in *Babylon?* And they were at this preſent under Tribute and ſubjection to the *Romans.* Note, that a cavilling Spirit is a lying Spirit too: They that are given to the one ſin, are given alſo to the other. But Chriſt did not mean this in the letter, or of any outward bondage; but of bondage by ſin that they were in. And ſo *v.* 24. he doth explain himſelf; *Whoſoever committeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin, i. e.* is in bondage to it; and ſo will find himſelf to be at laſt, *v.* 35. when he ſhall ſee that he muſt not abide any longer among the Children and Sons of God; but ſhall be ſent away as the Servant, or he that is bound

bound to his Maſter, is afterwards ſent out of the houſe, while thoſe that are the ſons, and Free ones, are kept in, as thoſe that have a Right, and a Privilege to ſtay, as I that am Gods natural Son do, and ſhall abide for ever in my Father's houſe, together with all his adopted Children who believe on me.

This 36*th* Verſe, to which I am now come, is Chriſt's drawing a concluſion from all this, applying this that he had been ſpeaking about *Bondage* and *Freedom*, to their caſe, that they, if they had had Grace, might have made a ſaving uſe of it for their own everlaſting good. *If the Son therefore ſhall make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed:* i. e. If I, who am the Son of God, and therefore am free, and can give freedom to others, if I make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed. Wherein you have,

1. The name by which Jeſus Chriſt calls himſelf, the *Son* of God; or, as 'tis in the *Greek*, *that* Son; that is ſuch a Son, as none is: for tho all the Saints are Sons, yet none of them is ſuch a Son as Chriſt is. He hath in all things the pre-eminence. I cannot now ſtand upon this, how far this Son goes beyond all the other Sons of God; 1. In reſpect of the *manner* of his being the Son

of God, by an unconceivable, eternal Generation. The Saints are the Sons of God by Faith, and by Grace, and by Adoption; but Christ by Nature. 'Tis the natural Priviledg of Christ, to be the Son of God; whereas we by nature were the Children of Wrath. 2. In respect of his whole *carriage* towards his Father. He never grieved, or displeased, or disobeyed his Father, *v.* 29*th* of this 8*th* of *John*, *I do always those things that please him.* But there are many wry treadings that the other Sons have cause to mourn for in their best walkings. *In many things we offend all.* There's no child of God upon earth so good a traveller to Heaven, but that he sometimes stumbles and falls, tho through Grace he rises again by Repentance. You have that description of a true child of God, whereby he is differenced from the wicked, tho he hath his sins and failings too, *Jer.* 8. 4. 3. In respect of his equality with his Father, according to his divine nature. He is so the Son of God, as that he is God equal to him, *Phil.* 2. 6. The Saints are the children of God, and partakers, by Faith, of the Divine Nature; but yet there is an infinite distance between God and them: they are Creatures still, tho they be renewed: Tho they

they are united to God, yet they are not changed *into* God: But this Son is as holy, as glorious, as great as his Father.

2. You have here what this Son can do for poor sinful men: And that is, he can *make them free*, set them at perfect liberty, knock off all their chains and bolts wherewith they are bound and fettered. *If the Son shall make you free: i. e.* I can do it, if you will but be willing.

3. The nature of this Freedom that he can give to poor sinners: *i. e.* Freedom *indeed*; *ye shall be free indeed*; or as the *Greek* word is, you shall have a Freedom that is *real:* that is, a *substantial* Freedom; ὄντως ἐλεύθεροι; it shall not be an imaginary thing, as that which you now think you have; but it shall be a Freedom that hath *Truth and Being* in it, to go as near as I can to the Original Language. Well, now the point is this, That,

Doct. *The Lord Jesus Christ doth offer a most excellent Freedom to sinners that are in Bondage; and that 'tis every ones duty to look after his particular share in it.*

The Branches of this Point are Five in number, all of them clearly arising from this Text, as you may easily see.

The

The 1. Branch, for order ſake, as to my handling of it, is, That ſinners are in Bondage. For to be made *free*, doth ſuppoſe that ſinners are *not* free. Chriſt ſpeaks to them, as perſons that were not *yet* free. *If the Son therefore ſhall make you free:* i. e. *yet* you are *not* made free, for you commit ſin; and whoſoever commits ſin, is the *ſervant* of ſin.

2. Branch, That Jeſus Chriſt doth offer Freedom to poor ſinners that are in the houſe of Bondage. *If the Son ſhall make you free.* You ſee he ſpeaks as one that offers it.

3. That it is every ones duty to look after this Freedom, that they be in the number of thoſe that are brought into liberty: And that is in theſe words, [*you free*]. *You* and *you* ſhould labour to obtain it.

4. That this Freedom comes by *Chriſt*. 'Tis Chriſt that gives it: Whoever is made free, is made free by Chriſt.——*If the Son ſhall make*, &c.

5. That the Freedom which Chriſt offers to ſinners, and gives to believers, is a moſt excellent Freedom. *If the Son therefore ſhall make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed.* As no Bondage is like that Bondage, ſo no Freedom is like this Freedom.

Of

Of these Five Branches of the Doctrine, I intend, God willing, to speak in *their order.*

The first Branch of the Doctrine is this, *That sinners are in Bondage.*

I shall labour to open this Bondage to you in some Particulars.

1. 'Tis a *real* Bondage; 'tis as sure as any thing in the World, that sinners are in Bondage. 'Tis as true as the Word of God it self is true: For the Word of God tells us so. As the liberty that Believers have by Christ, is a Freedom *indeed*; so the Bondage that sinners are in, is a Bondage *indeed.* Mark how *Peter* speaks to *Simon Magus*, who was one of these sinners, *Acts* 8. 23. *For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity. q. d.* It may be thou dost not think, that thou art there; but there *thou art.* Now that this Bondage is a real thing, appears by Two things, to name no more:

1. By the description that the Scripture gives of the state of sinners. Look into them, and you shall see, that they are said to be Captives, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. to be in Prison, *Isa* 42. 7. to be under the *power* of darkness, *Col.* 1. 13. to *lie in* wickedness, 1 *John* 5. 19. to be all their life-time subject to bondage, *Heb.* 2. 15.

2. By

2. By the wonderful awakened ſenſe that thoſe ſinners have of their condition, to whom it pleaſes God to ſhew mercy. Oh how ſenſible they are! and what a World of danger do they apprehend themſelves to be in, and what haſte do they make to get out of it, as a man that ſees he ſtands upon a ſinking ground, that if he does not get off preſently, 'twill ſwallow him up. It ſets them all on a trembling, to ſee where they are, *Acts* 16. 29, 30. Now why have they ſuch *real* deep apprehenſions of their condition? Why, ſurely becauſe they ſee 'tis a *real* Bondage.

2. This Bondage is a *natural* Bondage; a ſlavery that we have by nature, which is contracted by the Fall of our firſt Parents. We were *born* in bondage: The Fall of *Adam* was the beginning of this Bondage: *there* he, and we in him, loſt our Freedom, *viz.* that holy image of God in which he made us. Pray labour to lay this Fall to heart more: for here was the inlet to all our miſery. Many are apt to think of the Fall of *Adam* and *Eve*, as if there were little or nothing that concerned them in it: Whereas, alas! in that very ſin, all our Freedom went away, unleſs it were a freedom to ſin; that ſtaid with us ſtill. And, Beloved,

ved, let me tell you, you are not throughly humbled for ſin, if you be not humbled for this Original Sin, this Bondage by nature, *Pſal.* 51. 5.

3. 'Tis an *univerſal* Bondage, that includes all that are out of Chriſt, over the whole World. Not one unconverted ſinner is a Freeman. Now Beloved, if any of you ſhould go into a very large Priſon, that hath a great many Rooms in it, and Holes, and Dungeons; and wherever you go, you ſhould ſee all over, the Priſon full, and ſome of them ſeem to be men of good faſhion, and yet notwithſtanding *Priſoners* too; why, when you go out, you would be ready to tell the next body you were acquainted with, If you had been where I have, you would wonder to ſee what abundance of Priſoners there be: The Houſe was even ſtopt with Priſoners; and you would have wondered to ſee what brave proper perſons ſome of them were; and how ſome went in ſuch Cloaths, that one would not have thought that they had been Priſoners, and yet they were Priſoners too. Methinks the World is much like this: The World hath a great many wide Rooms, and Holes, and Corners: There's ſuch a Houſe, and it may be a great many live in that; but then

there's

there's ſuch a Town, or Pariſh, and many more live in that; but then there's ſuch a Shire, or County, and many more live in that; but then there is ſuch a Nation, or Kingdom, and many more live in that; but then there's the whole World, and many more live in that; and generally up and down, the moſt of theſe are Priſoners upon a Spiritual account; and how richly are ſome of theſe cloathed, and how deliciouſly do they live in the World! and yet many of *them* Priſoners too, *walking* Priſoners, *laughing* Priſoners, *learned* Priſoners. In a word, we were all Priſoners by nature; and all that are out of Chriſt are ſo ſtill. 'Tis an *univerſal* Bondage, reaching to every one of them, *Gal.* 3. 22.——*all under ſin.*

4. This Bondage is a *cruel* Bondage. We read in Scripture of cruel Bondages, as that of the Children of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*, and in *Babylon*, where they were in the Iron Furnace; and yet theſe were but a ſhadow of this. Theſe things that I ſhall now name, you'l ſay your ſelves, will make a very cruel Bondage, and all of them are in a Sinner's Bondage, above any Bondage that is. For I would ſtay a little upon this.

1. To be ſet to the baſeſt work; to be made

made a very drudg of, that there is not the most nasty stinking Imployment that is, but *that* shall be cut out for one. The hard Bondage of the Children of *Israel*, is set out by this, that they were made to work in Mortar, and in Brick, *&c. Exod.* 1. 14. base dawbing work, that they could never keep themselves clean. Thus 'tis with sinners: What doth the Devil imploy them about? Why, they have such filthy work, that they are called *filthy* persons, *unclean* persons. In this *John* 8.44. *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.* Their work is to do the Devils *lusts*; whatever comes into his filthy mind, that they must go upon; or whatever filthiness he suggests to their minds, they must do it: yea, and they *will* do it, says Christ. He hath such a power in them, and such a conquest over them, that he hath brought their very *Wills* into *obedience*. They *will* do what the Devil will have them do: therefore 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. they are said to be *taken captive at his will.*

2. To have such a Master as hates one The cruel Bondage of the Children of *Israel.* is set out by this, *Psal.* 106. 41. Thus 'tis with sinners, they serve the Devil, and they work as hard as they can, (see *Jer.* 3. 5. *Micah* 7. 3.) and yet he hates them: While they

they do *his work*, he seeks *their ruin*; while they are *serving* of him, he is *slaying* of them: For do what you will, or can for the Devil, you can never make him your friend. He is, and he will be an enemy to all Mankind. He won't do that which the World does: the World will love its own, but the Devil won't love *his own*.

3. To have *many* Masters at once. But you will say, Christ himself says, that *no man can serve two Masters*. *Ans.* No, he cannot, if they be contrary one to another: So you are to understand that place, *Mat.* 6. 24. but if they be subordinate one to another, he may; and a sinner doth; he serves many Masters at once; he serves the *Devil*, and that while he serves the *World*; and the *Creature*, that he worships; and he serves *divers Lusts and Pleasures*, *Tit.* 2. 3. he is hurried to such a sin, and such a sin. The Devil he is *tempting*, and the World that is *alluring*, and the Flesh that's *craving*, and Lust that's *raging*, and all at one and the same time. What a cruel Bondage is this!

4. To be allowed *no Rest*. *Get you unto your burdens*, said *Pharaoh*, in that Bondage in *Egypt*; see *Exod.* 5. 4, 5. He could not endure that they should have any rest. So the

the Devil allows no reſt; he is a reſtleſs Spirit himſelf; he is deſcribed as one always at work, *Job* 1. 7. He comes *from going to and fro in the earth; and walking up and down in it.* And after this, he goes and does a great deal of miſchief preſently by Gods permiſſion: He ſtirs up the *Sabeans* to plunder *Job* of Five Hundred Yoke of Oxen, and Five hundred She-Aſſes, and to ſlay the Servants that were with them, all but one, *v.* 14, 15. And then he was permitted to burn up Seven thouſand Sheep, and the Servants with them, all but one, *v.* 16. And then he got the *Chaldeans* to come and carry away Three thouſand Camels, and kill the Servants with them, all but one, *v.* 17. And yet he cannot reſt. Then he gets the Houſe to fall upon *Job*'s Children, and killed them, *v.* 19. Now one would have thought when he had done all this miſchief, and eſpecially to one man, he ſhould have been quiet; but he is at work ſtill otherwhere, after all this, *cap.* 2. 2. *Going to and fro in the earth*, &c. and now he comes again, to beg that he may do more miſchief to *Job* yet; and ſo he does, when God had given him leave, *v.* 7. *he ſmote Job with ſore boils, from the ſole of his foot unto his Crown.* Now

I say, he is a restless Spirit himself, always doing mischief: and so he desires that all that serve him should be *always* at his work too. 'Tis an expression concerning those that are the Devils Slaves, that they cannot *rest*, *Isa.* 57. 20. He makes them work in their very Beds, *Micah* 2. 1. What a cruel Bondage is this!

5. To be paid for all ones drudging in nothing but counterfeit Coyn. Now all that the Devil gives his Servants, is but Brass money. If it looks well, 'tis but washt over: not any of it hath Gods Image or Superscription upon it. 'Tis not like the wages God gives his Servants; 'tis all dross within. They have pleasure, but 'tis *counterfeit pleasure*: They have peace, but 'tis *counterfeit peace*: They have hope, but 'tis *counterfeit* hope, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. The Serpent *beguiled Eve*——He paid her all in counterfeit Coin. The best wages that the Devil gives for his work, is but deceit, *Rev.* 12. 9. He is said to deceive the World, and the whole World. There is not one that works for him, that is not deceived by him. What a cruel Bondage is this, *to be working* so hard, and to be put off with a cheat!

But

But yet further, there are two things more, that make this Bondage to be more cruel than any other Bondage: And they are,

1. That tho the Devil's Servants do their Taſks, *yet* they ſhall be beaten. You read of that cruel Bondage in *Egypt*, That when they *did not* do their Tasks, they were beaten, *Exod.* 5. 14. but here they are beaten *tho they do them.* 'Tis a fruit and effect of the Devils Service, that the more one ſerves him, the more one is beaten, the more laſhes, and the more ſtings of Conſcience one ſhall have. To ſerve the Devil, 'tis the way to be beaten black and blew; ſee *Mat.* 27. 3, 4, 5. *Judas* had done his work the Devil ſet him about; he had done out his Task: and *then* is the time that *Judas* muſt be beaten: *Then* Conſcience fell upon him, ſo that he hangs himſelf.

2. This alſo makes this Bondage more cruel than any other Bondage, that in this Bondage the *Souls* of ſinners are in Bondage. Other Bondages are upon the Body, and the outward Man; but this is upon the Soul *chiefly.* Indeed the Members of the Body are under this Bondage too. The eye, that is an Inſtrument of ſin, and the ear that's another,

and the tongue, and the hands, and the feet, and all the Members are imployed about evil, *Rom.* 6. 19. But above all, the Soul, and the Faculties of that, are in this ſpiritual thraldom. The *Underſtanding*, bondage is upon *that*, by reaſon of darkneſs, and ignorance: the *Will*, bondage is upon *that*, by reaſon of that ſtubbornneſs and diſobedience that is in ſinners againſt God: the *Affections*, Bondage is upon them, by reaſon of their diſorder: the *Mind* and *Heart*, Bondage is upon them, by reaſon of their being defiled, and hardened: the *Conſcience*, bondage is upon *that*, by reaſon of its ſeareднеſs. So that the very *Seat and Throne* of the Devil is *within* them, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. *In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not*, &c. The Bondage is *within* them. *Eph.* 2. 2. *He worketh in the children of diſobedience.* Now what a cruel Bondage is this, to have the precious Soul in the hand of the Devil, to be a Slave *inwardly* to all unrighteouſneſs! This is the Fourth thing in the Deſcription of this Bondage. 'Tis a cruel Bondage that ſinners are in. And then

5. As 'tis a cruel Bondage, ſo 'tis a *curſed* Bondage: The wrath and curſe of God belongs to this Condition. When the Chil-

'ren

dren of *Iſrael* were in their cruel Bondage in *Egypt*, yet notwithſtanding they were beloved of God. The Scripture ſays, That *God had reſpect to them*, *Exod.* 2. 25. He caſt an *affectionate look* upon them. But he hath annexed his high diſpleaſure, and threatned his vengeance againſt all that ſhall abide in this Bondage. He threatens to caſt them off for ever. This you have implied in that *Gal.* 4. 30. *out* with them: A little while hence (if they don't now get their Freedom) God will ſend them to their own place: from their Priſon of Sin, to the Priſon of Hell. And therefore amongſt other parts of their Bondage, they are ſaid to be in Bondage to *the Law*; or to be *under the Law*; which becauſe they have broken, and have no ſurety to ſtand up for them, denounceth all its Plagues, and all its Curſes againſt them, let them live never ſo much in the outward Righteouſneſs of the Law, *Gal.* 3. 10. *As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe.*

6. Yet tho this is a *cruel* and a *curſed* bondage that ſinners are in, it is *not a bondage without hope.* We don't know what a merciful purpoſe the Lord may have concerning ſome of you that are yet ſhut up in this houſe of bondage: whether he may

not deal with you as he did with *Israel.* Pray read that precious place, *Exod.* 6. 5, to 9. *I* (saith God to *Moses*) *have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembred my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage: and I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments. And I will take you to me for a people. and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord.* If it may but be thus with you now! why, who can tell? There is a way of deliverance out of this bondage, if you will but hearken after it; as I shall shew upon the second branch of this Doctrine, That *Jesus Christ doth offer Freedom to poor sinners that are in the house of bondage.* But before I come to that, I will make a little *Application* of this, That *sinners are in bondage.*

*Use*

*Use* 1. And are they so? Then 1. This may serve to cast an everlasting contempt and reproach upon all the ways of sin, in that it brings into and keeps all that walk in them, in bondage. Oh what a thing is sin now! What do you think of sin, Sirs, upon this account? Is not this an Enemy that you should all rise up against, and never be quiet till you have got it rooted up out of your hearts? Is this a thing to be loved and pleaded for, and to be let alone as if there were no hurt in it? Oh! now methinks I might hope that there is none of you that would speak one word on sins side. Why, behold what it hath done: It hath brought the whole World into slavery. As soon as ever we began to have any thing to do with it, it took us Prisoners. It made our first Father, and all his Children miserable creatures. It set up the Kingdom of the Devil in every one of us. Yea, beloved, there is not a sin that any of you commit, but would undo you to all eternity, if infinite mercy do not come between you and the mischief that would follow upon it. I cannot express the evil that is in sin to you. 'Tis a thing of a dreadful *nature*, and of dreadful *effects*. As for the *nature* of it, 'tis the *transgression of the lo-*

*by Law of God*; 'tis *opposition* to his *Will*; 'tis *enmity* against his blessed and holy Majesty; 'tis that which doth, as it were, rend his sacred Image all to pieces. As for the *effects* of it, it separates God and man from one another; it robs him of likeness to him, and communion with him; it hardens his heart against all that is good, and inclines him to all manner of disobedience; 'tis that which fills the World with sorrow, and is the cause of all miseries in this life, and that which is to come. Oh that I could tell how to bring you out of love with sin. Why, Sirs, if God should deal with you according to the desert of one sin, you would never live a comfortable day. I cannot part with this *Use*, but I must endeavour a little to leave an everlasting brand of reproach upon a sinful life; and therefore consider Four things of which it is made up; *viz.*

1. *Innumerable Wickednesses.*
2. *Abominable Filthiness.*
3. *Lamentable Deceitfulness.*
4. *Unspeakable Wretchedness.*

1. *Innumerable Wickednesses.* A sinful life is a *Sea of sin.* As abundance of waters

ters do meet in the Sea, ſo abundance of wickedneſs doth meet in a ſinful life. 'Tis a life to which all manner of ſins flow: Adultery, Blaſphemy, Covetouſneſs, Drunkenneſs, Envy, Falſe dealing, Gluttony, Hypocriſie, Idleneſs, Lying, Murder, Pride, Quarrelling, Railing, Swearing, Theft, Uncleanneſs, Witchcraft, *&c. Amos* 5. 12. *I know*, ſaith God, *your manifold tranſgreſſions.* 'Tis not to be reckoned up what Volumes of wickedneſs one unſanctified heart is full of. Oh what hath every Chriſtleſs Soul to give account for, when as all the Faculties of the Soul, and all the Members of the Body, are ſinning, and ſinning, and ſinning againſt God continually? And yet as many as they are, God keeps an account of them every one. *I know them*, ſaith he. They are forgotten by them that commit them, but they are remembred by him that forbids them. *Hoſ.* 7. 2. *They conſider not in their hearts, that I remember all their wickedneſs.* Mark, he remembers *all*; and, without repentance, he will make *you* to remember them again, tho now you have forgotten them; *Pſal.* 50. 21. he will *ſet them in order before your eyes.*

2. A ſinful life hath in it *Abominable Filthineſs*, *Pſal.* 14. 3. The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaking of the children of men, with reſpect to their ſinfulneſs, ſays of them, that *they are altogether become filthy*. They that live in their ſins, are a polluted people. Hence the Scripture ſays they are *defiled*; that the wicked is *loathſome*. It compares them to *Ethiopians*, or *Blackmores*. They are ſo filthy, that God charges all his people to come out from among them, and be ſeparate, and touch none of their unclean things. Their ſins make them deformed creatures in the ſight of God and good men. A ſinner is ſo filthy, that till he be waſhed, he is fit for no Company but his own, and the Devil's. God won't let him come near him, *Pſal.* 119. 119. *Thou putteſt away all the wicked of the earth like droſs.* Gods people don't care to be familiar with them, *v.* 115. *Depart from me ye evil doers.* And yet this is not Pride in them, but 'tis their duty to keep at a diſtance from the wicked in their ſins, *Eph.* 5. 11. *to have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs.*

3. There is in it *Lamentable Deceitfulneſs.* Says the Apoſtle, *We our ſelves were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived,* &c. *Tit.*

*Tit.* 3. 3. The luſts to which they give up themſelves, are called deceitful Luſts, *Eph.* 4. 22. and *Heb.* 3. 13. there is expreſs mention made of the *deceitfulneſs* of *ſin*: *Exhort one another daily* (ſays the Apoſtle), *leſt any of you be hardened through the* deceitfulneſs *of ſin*. There are many that are wiſe to ſin, but yet they are not wiſe enough to avoid the deceits and ſnares that are in ſin. While they nibble at the Bait, they don't ſee the Hook. When the Devil comes to tempt us to ſin, he comes with his wiles and devices; he plays the Serpent, and the *old* Serpent: he will tell a man, that that which is a ſin, is no ſin; and ſo make him believe he is ſerving God, when he is ſinning againſt him. Our Saviour foretells his Diſciples, that *the time comes, that whoſo kills them, ſhall think that he doth God good ſervice*, *Joh.* 16. 2. Accordingly the Apoſtle *Paul* profeſſeth, *Acts* 26. 9. That he verily thought with himſelf, that he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of *Jeſus of Nazareth*. He will tell a man, that he may do ſuch and ſuch a thing, for none ſees him; and the poor deluded ſinner thinks that he is hid, becauſe he ſins in ſecret, or in the dark; whereas the *eyes of the Lord are upon the ways of man, and he*

*pondereth*

*ponders all his goings*, Prov. 5. 21. He will tell a ſinner, that there's time enough to repent, when he may die the next hour. He will tell a ſinner, that God is merciful, of purpoſe that *he* may miſs of mercy. He will promiſe pleaſure, when 'twill end in pain; and peace, when 'twill end in trouble; and profit, when 'twill end in the loſs of the Soul. He will tell us, that we are juſtified, when we are not ſanctified; and that we are real Saints, becauſe others count us ſo; that our Gifts are Graces, and that we have communion with God in Duties, becauſe we have good Expreſſions in our mouths. Oh, Sirs! take heed to your Souls: watch againſt all the deluſions of your ſpiritual Enemies. There are Four great Deceivers that you are in great danger by: 1. a deceitful Devil. 2. Deceitful Sin. 3. A deceitful World. 4. Your own deceitful Hearts.

4. There is alſo in a ſinful life *Unſpeakable Wretchedneſs*, Rom. 3. 16. *Deſtruction and miſery are in their ways.* Sin makes one more wretched than any affliction, or any ſuffering in the World can do. Look into that *Eph.* 2. 12. and tell me if a ſinner is not a wretched creature, *Ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the Common-*

*mon wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world.* Mark, *without Chriſt.* There's enough, if there were no more. To be out of *Chriſt!* why, 'tis to be amongſt them that are loſt, among them that are unpardoned, among them that are unſanctified. *Aliens from the commonwealth of Iſrael*; to wit, from them that God owns. *Strangers from the covenants of promiſe.* Is not that a woful thing, to have none of the promiſes, and all of the threatnings of the Word belonging to one? *Having no hope.* Is not that a ſad condition to have no hope?

*Object.* But wicked men are full of hopes.

*Anſ.* But alas! what hope is it? No true hope, upon no good ground. They call it hope, but God calls it no hope. ——*without God in the world!* what a wretched condition is that, that whatever they have, they have not God in it? God out of any thing is a miſery; God out of the Creature, God out of Affliction, God out of Ordinances. And after all this wretchedneſs, to be wretched for ever, to ſuffer the torments of Hell World without end, without a change of our condition, *Pſal* 9. 17. All this conſider'd,

is

is not sin, and all the ways, and all the works of sin, worthy of everlasting contempt and hatred?

*Use* 2. But more particularly to you that are in this bondage, I must tell you, That this bondage of yours is an unexcusable bondage. Perhaps you may think now, that this will lessen your guilt: Why, how can I be good? or how can I serve God? or how can I leave my sins? why, I am a person in bondage; and what freedom hath one that is in a Prison?

*Ans.* I answer, This were something, if it were against your *wills*; but you are willingly in this bondage. You are like that servant, *Exod.* 21. 5. *I love my Master——— I will not go out free.* Do you remember what Christ says? *John* 5. 40. you *will not come unto me that you might have life.* Now consider but Three things, and you must needs say this is a *willing* bondage, and therefore inexcusable. For, 1. You have *sold your selves* into this condition, as those 2 *Kings* 17. 17. *sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.* Pray how came you into this bondage? Is it not your own doing? You were not made thus by God. He may say as 'tis in *Jer.* 2. 21. *I*

21. *I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right ſeed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a ſtrange vine?* Our corruption is from our ſelves, and our deſtruction is from our ſelves. By nature we *yield* up our Members, as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs That's the Scripture Expreſſion. 'Tis our own voluntary act. 'Twas not poſſible that Mankind could ever have come into ſuch thraldom, had they not given up their conſent, and joyned with Satan againſt God.

2. 'Tis a willing bondage, if we conſider the cheap and low terms upon which all this is done. Sinners did not ſtand out to have any *great rewards* in conſideration of their woful ſlavery; but the Devil gets them to be his Servants at an eaſie rate. I don't mean in reſpect of themſelves; for 'twill be a dear bondage to them, without mercy from the Lord; but in reſpect of what Satan does for them: In lieu of all that they do for him, alas! he feeds them with a few painted pleaſures, that carry more ſtings than ſweetneſs in them for the preſent, and that will be turned all into bitterneſs in the latter end, *Job* 20. 12, 13, 14. 'Tis a brand that is laid upon *prophane Eſau*, that *for one morſel of meat he ſold his birth-*

*righ*

*right*, *Heb.* 12. 16. So what have ſinners for their Souls? What have they for all their wearying themſelves with the fulfilling of their luſts, but a wicked life, and a wretched death? See *Iſa.* 52. 3. *Ye have ſold your ſelves for nought.*

3. 'Tis a willing bondage, becauſe you do *not groan* under it. You are *contented* with your Chains, and you are *contented* with your Priſon. Where be your prayers? and where be your tears? and where be your cries to God, that you may be delivered? If it were thus with you, you would ſhew that you were unwillingly where you are: and this would be the way to be delivered, as it was with the children of *Iſrael* in their bondage in *Egypt*, *Exod.* 2. 23, 24, 25. But you ſit ſtill.

*Uſe* 3. Something to you that God hath brought out of this bondage, and then I have done with this Branch. Three things I leave with you, as your duty.

1. Pity poor ſinners that are in this bondage. Can you look upon them, or think of their condition, without compaſſion? Here be Objects of pity, if there be any in the World! Here's matter of prayer for you, to ſpeak to God on the behalf of theſe

poor

poor wretched creatures. Here's matter for your larger hope to work upon. Oh Friends! if you saw one of the saddest creatures that ever your eyes beheld, for worldly distress, you would bestow some pity and some help there. But oh, the pity and the help, and the bowels that these do need, whose souls are in the bondage of sin! I beseech you, don't see men and women live without the fear of God; and such multitudes of sinners flocking and posting to everlasting perdition, as there be, and yet not be affected with their case. What *Paul* says in another sense to the *Colossians*, *cap.* 4. 18. *Remember my bonds.* I say to you, Remember sinners bonds. Prayer may do that in this case, which is like to *Acts* 12. 5, 6, 7.

2. Be thankful for your own deliverance. Oh what cause have you to praise God for his great mercy to your souls! Time was, that you were in bondage, as they are; were the Servants of sin as they are, and yet you have been graciously visited, and by a mighty hand, and a stretched-out arm God hath brought you out of this house of bondage: he hath taken off the yoke of your spiritual captivity, that now you can say, as in *Gal.* 4. 31. *We are not children of the bond-*

*bond-woman, but of the free.* Well now, what high admiring thoughts should you have of this Grace that is bestowed upon you through Jesus Christ! Let me commend that Scripture to you: it fits your case exceedingly, *Psal.* 106. 1, 2. then verse 10. to 17.

3. Love, and live to your Redeemer: Abide stedfast with Christ in your Liberty, *Gal.* 5. 1. *Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* You know when God had delivered his people out of *Egypt*, *Pharoah* and all his Host went after them, if it were possible, to bring them back again: So the Devil, he follows redeemed souls to have them again if he could. Oh, how he tempts them to get them back! And if that won't do (as it shall not with Gods Elect) yet he does what he can to make them live as if they were *not* delivered, as if they were *not purged* from their old sins. Oh take heed of this! I tell you, Christ expects now, that you should do his service, as before you did the service of sin. And as the serving of sin is an Evidence of being in *that bondage*; So 'tis only the serving of Christ that will be an Evidence that you are come to *this Freedom.* I conclude with

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that 1 *Cor.* 6. laſt words of *ver.* 19. and the 20*th* verſe, *Ye are not your own: For ye are bought with a price: Therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are Gods*, and ſhew by your walking, that you dont forget this mercy, and that you dont make light of it. *Deut.* 15. 15. *Thou ſhalt remember that thou waſt a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command this thing to day.* All God's commands *to you*, are grounded upon his redeeming-kindneſs. Becauſe you are redeemed, be obedient, and watch againſt being defiled by new ſins.

## CHAP. II.

*Wherein is handled the second branch of the Doctrine; namely, That Jesus Christ doth offer freedom to poor sinners that are in the house of bondage.*

I Come now to the second Branch of the Doctrine; which is, *That Jesus Christ doth offer freedom to poor sinners that are in the house of bondage. If the Son shall make you free.* It carries an offer of Freedom in it. I shall shew,

1. What is to be observed in this offer, from this kind of Expression, *If the Son shall make you free.*

2. Where Christ doth offer this Freedom.

3. Upon what accounts he doth offer it in respect of himself.

To the 1. From this kind of Expression, *If the Son shall make you free*, observe Two Things.

1. That this Offer is *real*. Christ doth not deceive, or dissemble with sinners, but really

really he doth desire they should have Liberty. Men sometimes make offers of good things to one another, but they are not sincere in them. But it is not so with Christ: He is a real well-wisher to sinners souls. He hath expresst it all the ways that can be desired. Would you believe his reality, if he does *wooe* sinners? Why, so he does, *Luke* 14. 23. *compel them to come in, viz.* by importunate entreaty. Would you believe his reality, if he does *wait* for sinners? Why, so he does, *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold I stand at the door, and knock*, &c. Would you believe his reality if he does *weep* for sinners? Why, so he does, He wept over *Jerusalem*, *Luke* 19. 41, 42. Would you believe his reality if he does *dye* for sinners? Why, so he did, *Rom.* 5. 8. *While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Nay, would you believe his reality if he should be *damned* for sinners? Why, so he was, tho not in respect of the place, yet in respect of the pains of Hell: *He was made a curse for us*, *Gal.* 3. 13. What would you have Christ to say or do more than he hath said and done, to convince you, that he would have sinners to be partakers of this Freedom. Hath he not said so in his word? Hath he not sealed it with his blood? Hath he not accepted and em-

braced from time to time, whoever came unto him? Doth he not engage himself by his faithful promise, to do so still to the end of the World, That he *will in no wise cast out such as come to him*, *John* 6. 37. And yet what a wonder is it, that the World is so unbelieving still? and so hard to be perswaded, that Christ hath any loving thoughts or purposes towards them? Oh this cursed unbelief, and hardness of heart, that is in men and women, that makes them, that they will not come to Christ that they might have life!

2. *If the Son shall make you free*]. Observe from it, That this Freedom is *needed* by sinners. Spiritual Freedom is one of their greatest wants. This is implied in Christs offer. There is a Two fold need that we have of things.

1. There is a need for *conveniency*, That tho one could make a shift to be without such a thing, yet it would be more convenient a great deal, to have it. They could do *better* with it, than without it. Now 'tis true, That sinners have this need of Christ, and the benefits of his Redemption, it would be highly convenient for them. Christ is so fit and suitable to their condition, that the least that can be said of it is, That to be sure they

they can do better with him than without him. If they had Christ, and had the Freedom that he offers them, it would not at all be inconvenient for them. He would be no hindrance to them: It would be *more* for their profit, and *more* for their good, than it can be now. If they had him, he would be no clog nor burden. Let them look to it how they can do well without him: I am sure they might do better with him. No soul receives him to his loss. It will be to our loss to refuse him, but it cannot be to our loss to receive him. Can it be to ones loss to become a child of God? See *John* 1. 12. *As many as received him, to them gave he power* (right or priviledg) *to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* Why, therefore I warrant thee, poor sinner, if thou hadst Christ, he would not hurt thee; he would be *convenient* enough for thee. But alas! this is too low: This is not worthy of Christ, to speak meerly in this kind of way. Therefore,

2. There is a need for *necessity*, for *absolute necessity*, That if one hath not such a thing, there is no shift can be made, in the world, without it. You may bring this and that, and try whether 'twill serve instead of it,

but all wont do. If you had but *that*, that would do *alone*, but nothing will do without it. Now *such* need there is of Christ, *nothing* will do without him: *There's not salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved*, Acts 4. 12. There be many that have tryed to get their freedom, and pardon, and salvation in another way, but all in vain. Some have gone to an outward Profession for it; some have gone to this and that Opinion for it; and some have gone to Duties, and to the Righteousness of the Law for it: but all would not do. No: why, 'tis Christ that is the *one thing needful*. Oh beloved! labour to press and urge this upon your souls; You *must* have Christ; and therefore ask thy soul, Soul, why dost stand a dallying, and a trifling? and why art so hard to be perswaded to close with him? Why, have him I *must*, and therefore have him I *will*. I know there's this and that in my way to hinder me; but through Gods help, nothing shall hinder me; I'le break through all difficulties. I, poor soul, the Lord grant thou maist: and I am confident, that if thou once comest to this, the Lord will give him thee. He never denies Christ to them that will take no denial. If they

they *will* have him, they *ſhall* have him. 'Tis a very obſervable and encouraging Scripture, in that diſcourſe of our Saviour with the woman of *Samaria*, *John* 4. 10. *Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid unto her, If thou knewеſt the gift of God, and who it is that ſaith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldeſt have asked of him.* The *Greek* word ſignifies, thou would'ſt have asked like an importunate beggar, that *muſt* have what he came for: And what follows? *and he would have given thee living water.*

3. *If the Son ſhall make you free*]. Obſerve again in this Offer, That Chriſt *prevents ſinners* with his mercy. He is aforehand with them. They do not ſay to Chriſt, Pray, will you make us free? but he makes the firſt mention of Freedom to them. Free Grace is the moſt condeſcending thing that ever was. Never did any creature ſo ſtoop to another, as God ſtoops to ſinners. He comes and knocks at *their* door, before ever they knock at his, 2 *Cor.* 5. 12. *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelf.* Mark, the World was not reconciling it ſelf to God, nor God to it ſelf; but God reconciling the World to himſelf, God's love is always the *firſt* love: 'Tis the Fountain, and

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the Cause of our love to him, 1 *John* 4. 19. *We loved him, because he first loved us.* 'Tis true, that the Lord is sought unto for mercy by them to whom he intends to shew it; but 'tis the Lord that stirs up their hearts to do it: He sets them a crying, and then they cry. They come to Christ, but 'tis the Father that *draws* them. There could be no desires, or breathings in us after God, if they were not begotten of his Spirit. Alas! our corrupt nature wont afford one good desire, till God give it. It will go further from God, but it wont come nearer to him of it self. And therefore the mercy of God towards poor souls, is a very wonderful thing, not only in that it is so *large*, but in that it is so *early*. It is up before the soul is up, *Isa.* 65. 1. *I am sought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.* Oh, how much are we beholding to Christ, for coming to us first!

4. *If the Son shall make you free*]. *If* he shall. Observe this next, That 'tis much to be feared, whether some that have the Offers of Grace, will ever close with them. Here you see they had an Offer of Freedom; but Christ puts a doubtful word upon it, as

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to their acceptance: *If he ſhall*, &c. As if he ſhould ſay, It may be ſome of you will hear of this, and yet never partake in it, but live and die in the bondage that you are in. In this very Chapter, where Chriſt is offering this Freedom, he tells ſome of them in *ver.* 21. that they would *die in their ſins.* Now beloved, oh what a joyful thing would it be, if you would all accept of this Freedom, and cloſe with this Grace that is offered to you! Why, truly it would be ſuch a joyful thing, if *but one* amongſt you ſhould accept of it, that it would be enough to ſet all Heaven a rejoycing, *Luke* 15. 7. 10. And why ſhould I not hope, but that it may be thus with ſome or other of you? yea, perhaps with many of you. The Lord grant, that there may not be one amongſt you, that ſhall turn his back upon Chriſt. Whoever that man or woman ſhall be, wo be to them. And yet now 'tis much to be feared, that Chriſt will be rejected by ſome, to whom he hath been offered. The Apoſtle *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that he was *with them in weakneſs, and in fear, and in much trembling*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 3. Why, what made *Paul fear and tremble* ſo, that while he was a preaching, he was, as 'twere, all of a *trembling*? What, was it becauſe he was afraid to preach?

No:

No: but he was afraid what his preaching would come to, in respect of some of them, whether *ever* it would profit them, whether *ever* it would prevail with them. Now give me leave to acquaint you a little, what things, as to some persons, may be grounds of fear, whether ever they will close with Christ's gracious offer of Freedom.

1. In that there be so few, in comparison, in all Ages of the World, that have done it. Beloved, Christ's flock will be but little, when he hath gathered all his sheep. Heaven would hold a thousand times more than ever will come there. No doubt but there be some that seem now, as if they had closed with Christ, and yet will be found at last not to have done it. They have mistaken their whole work, and their hearts have deceived them from the beginning to the end. A right closing with Christ, is a very exact thing: 'Tis not every one can hit on it, *Mat.* 7. 14. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it.* And therefore may it not be feared, that this present Generation; yea, and this present Assembly, may have some amongst them that will never close with Gospel Offers?

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2. The little good news that there is up and down where the Goſpel comes, of the converſion of ſouls. People flock to Meetings; but *who believes our report, or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Sinners abiding in an unconverted condition, is a great ground of fear, what will become of their ſouls. If you have not yet *cloſed* with Chriſt, as unregenerate perſons have not, we cannot but fear you may loſe him. If a man be in a very dangerous ſickneſs, is there not cauſe to fear he will die? So if a man be ſtill out of Chriſt, why, certainly this is ſomething to queſtion, whether ever he will be in him, *Acts* 8. 22. *Peter* puts it as a doubtful caſe, whether ever *Simon Magus* would be pardoned his ſins, becauſe he was ſtill in an unrepenting condition.

3. When men do ſet light by Chriſt, and the Offers of Grace. There's great hopes of thoſe ſouls, that tho they have not cloſed with Chriſt, yet they begin to have good thoughts of him and his mercy, and love, and ſalvation, is ſomewhat commended; if they acknowledg, yea truly, this is the rich goodneſs of God, that ever ſuch Offers ſhould be made to me. I confeſs I do look upon Chriſt, and the Freedom that he holds

forth

forth to poor ſinners, as an excellent thing. God forbid that I ſhould ſay to the contrary. I know the pardon of ſin, and the love of God, are great Priviledges; happy is that ſoul that hath them: and I would I might be one of them. Ay, why, this is ſomething. Methinks 'tis a kind of Language that would give one ſome hope concerning ſuch a ſoul, as the young man in the Goſpel, when he did approve and commend of what Chriſt ſaid in *Mark* 12. 32, 33. *Well, maſter, thou haſt ſaid the truth,* &c. is anſwered by Chriſt, *v.* 34. ——*Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.* But now when a man ſhall look upon all that Chriſt offers to him, as nothing, and ſet himſelf to deſpiſe and diſgrace his invitations, as if Chriſt had done him no kindneſs in ſending all his meſſages of love to him; and let Chriſt go where he will, and his ſalvation go where it will, for his part, he does not care for them. This is a great ground of fear, that ſuch a perſon will never cloſe with the Offers of Grace. See *Mat.* 22. 3. Thoſe who in the Parable were called to the Marriage-Supper, it's ſaid, firſt they *would not come*: then *ver.* 4. being invited again, *ver.* 5. they fell a ſlighting of it, or, as in the *Greek*, they ſet it all at nought: and *ver.* 6. they

they dealt with his Servants, as if he that had ſent them had been their Enemy. Why, ſee *ver.* 7. what becomes of theſe perſons; they were *deſtroyed, and their City burnt*; and compare with it, *Luke* 14. 24. for 'tis all to the ſame purpoſe: they were not to *taſte of the ſupper.*

4. Another ground of fear, that ſome will never cloſe with Chriſt, is, when they *turn back* again from that forwardneſs to good things which they began to put forth. They ſeemed to have a love, and a zeal, and a deſire towards Chriſt: But it may be they are now grown dead, and cold, and careleſs. They had fine and hopeful *buds* a while ago. One might ſee how they were convinced, and ſtirred. Oh, what hope was there, that ſuch a one would prove a Convert and a Saint! But it may be all is gone, and worn off. Their goodneſs was but *like a morning cloud, and as the early dew it paſſed away*, *Hoſea* 6.4. 'Tis thus, beloved, with many that make a Profeſſion: They promiſe fair at the firſt, and for a while, but then there comes ſomething, and *turns off ſuch a one*, and then there comes another thing, and *turns off ſuch a one* and Chriſt and they are parted for ever. And therefore I beſeech you, as you love

love your souls, take heed of growing loose, and vain, and lukewarm, after you have begun to have set out for God. Oh! consider what a serious thing Religion is: and if you begin to own it, why, stand to it, charge your hearts against back-sliding. 'Tis a great sin to fall off from good beginnings, and exceeding dangerous to the soul; see 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21. *If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledg of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousnes, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*

5. Another ground of fear of this, is when persons are grown old, and are ready to go out of the World, and yet have not closed with Christ; that they have let it alone all their life hitherto, and now their *life* is even spent by course of nature. I would discourage none, tho they be stricken in years, from looking out for Christ. I know God is not bound to any time: He saves *whom he* will, and calls *when he* will But oh, you that have put off closing with Christ till old

old age, why, why did you not minde it ſooner? I ask you, Is this the *fitteſt* time for ſuch a work? or the *likelieſt* time for ſuch a work? Do you think there is not ſome reaſon to fear, leſt you ſhould die Chriſtleſs, as you have lived thus far without him? I dare not ſay that your condition is hopeleſs; but I will ſay, that the condition of young ones is more hopeful: Chriſt hath ſaid, *They that ſeek me early, ſhall find me*, Prov. 8. 17. I am certain, 'tis the great deſign of the devil to do what he can to hinder perſons from being good while they are young, becauſe he hopes that then they won't be good when they are old.

5. *If the Son ſhall make you free.*] *Shall make* you; obſerve one thing more from this kind of Expreſſion, *viz.* That upon whomſoever Chriſt beſtows this Freedom, he takes in the *conſent and will* of that perſon in the doing of it. Tho at the firſt, there is an unwillingneſs in the Soul, and Chriſt hath a croſs piece to deal with, and there's ſomewhat to do to get its conſent (as there is ſometimes in a perſon, to whom a man goes with a deſire to take her for his wife, ſhe is hard to be won) yet at laſt, the free and the full conſent

comes: So that when Christ hath put the question, *Soul, shall I make thee free?* and hath pressed it home with plentiful and powerful Arguments (as he knows how to do it) the Soul is brought to make this answer, *Thou shalt make me free*; much like to that, *Gen.* 24. 57, 58. where *Rebekah* being askt, Whether she would go with *Abrahams* servant, answers, *I will go.* The match between Christ and the Soul, 'tis not a forced business altogether; not but that he puts forth an holy violence in the work, else he would never obtain his suit: he *compells* them to come in; but it is such a compulsion that carries such love with it, as that the Soul neither *can* nor *will* finally stand out against him, but it casts it self at last into his arms and bosom, and 'tis *glad 'tis there*, Cant. 2. 3. And unless Christ should take in the will of the Soul, the Soul and Christ could never live comfortably together; and that's the great design of Christ, that the Soul should live comfortably with him, that it should have a husband that she can rejoice in. Yea, the soul is made so willing, that it would have Christ upon any terms. If Christ should, to try the truth and the constancy of her love, make as if he would not have her, and seem

to

to caſt her off, oh the thoughts of this would wound her, and grieve her ſo, as that ſhe cannot but faint under it: nothing will ſatisfie her but his perſon and preſence, *Cant.* 1. 2, 3, 4. *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine. ——Draw me, we will run after thee.——We will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine.* You ſee how ſweetly the Soul comes off to him; ſhe *reſolves* to run after him, and *reſolves* to love him, and *reſolves* to rejoice in him.

Hence then you may know, when there is like to be a match betwixt Chriſt and your Souls. How do your wills come off to the buſineſs? Are your *affections* turning towards him, and prizing of him? That's a ſign that Chriſt hath laid ſome good hold upon you, if he holds you *by the heart.* God hath undertaken, that Chriſt ſhall have the *free conſent* of thoſe whom he is to make his own, *Pſal.* 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power. Iſa.* 55. 5.——*Nations that knew thee not, ſhall* run *unto thee.* It is therefore this *willingneſs* that we pray that God would work in you; *and when that is once wrought, let all the devils in hell keep you from Chriſt if they can.*

The second thing proposed to be inquired into, upon this second Branch of the Point, is, *Where Christ offers this freedom.* And I answer, Where ever the Gospel comes. You that live under the Gospel, and the preaching of the Gospel, you live under a Dispensation, where *Soul-freedom* is to be gotten. You shall find, that when the preaching of the Gospel is spoken of, it is set forth as a Dispensation, under which poor sinners that are in bondage may come to Freedom. Thus *Act.* 26. 17, 18. Christ sayes, that he *sent Saul to the Gentiles, to turn them from the power of Satan unto God.* So, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *Paul* speaking of his Preaching, he saith, 'twas for the casting down of *strong holds*; that is, whatever holds a sinner in his spiritual Bondage, why this same Gospel which was preached by him, is a Dispensation for the pulling of it down, that by it, through the power of God going along with it, the imprisoned, inslaved soul, may be come at, and set free. So 2 *Tim.* 2. 25, 26. when *Paul* speaks to *Timothy* about his preaching the Gospel, he bids him instruct in meekness *them that oppose themselves*, &c.—and that they may *recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will*, &c.

shewing,

ſhewing, that the Goſpel is a Diſpenſation where Freedom may be gotten. And hence you may ſee, that this great Ordinance of preaching Chriſt to you, is ſet up and appointed by God for the bringing to paſs of great things. 'Tis the Lords mighty Engine, to work ſinners out of the kingdom of the devil; which when once 'tis done, oh how will a poor ſoul admire Gods goodneſs to it, and be thankful! So was it with the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Col.* 1.12,13. *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of ſaints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkneſs, and hath tranſlated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.*

And you Sirs, that are yet out of Chriſt, that come hither and hear the Goſpel preached, you muſt know that this is one of the Places and Aſſemblies in which Chriſt offers Freedom to you: and therefore, the great end of your coming hither ſhould be, that you may *get your freedom.* Don't come for *Faſhions* ſake, but for *Freedoms* ſake; that you may not any longer remain in this cruel, curſed Bondage, which I have ſhewed you are in.

*Obj.* But you ſaid, that *Chriſt* offers this Freedom: I don't ſee that Chriſt is here.

*Anſ.* 'Tis true, he is not here perſonally; Time was that Chriſt in his own perſon was in the World, and offered this Freedom; he ſpake theſe words here in the Text with his own mouth, *If the Son ſhall make you free, you ſhall be free indeed.* If you had lived in thoſe days in which Chriſt was upon Earth, and in any of the places to which he came, you might have heard Chriſt himſelf preach, and inviting and incouraging poor ſinners to come unto him, and take this Freedom: for when he was here, he made it his buſineſs to offer it up and down where ever he came. But that was but for a while; that bodily preſence of Chriſt was quickly withdrawn; after that he died and roſe again, and aſcended into Heaven, and there he ſits at the right hand of God, till he ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, *&c.* 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7, *&c.* But in another ſenſe he is here ſtill; and 'tis as well for the getting of your Freedom, as if he were here in perſon.

1. He is here by his *Embaſſadors*; what we do in his Name, that he doth by us. You never have any Miniſters of Chriſt preaching to you, but Chriſt is by them offering Freedom to you; and in this Work

Work and Miniſtration that we are about, you ſhould be carried beyond thoſe weakneſſes and infirmities which you ſee in us, and you ſhould conſider whom we repreſent, as the Apoſtle tells the *Galatians*, that they did ſo at his firſt preaching the Goſpel to them: See *Gal.* 4. 13, 14. *Ye know how through infirmity of the fleſh, I preached the goſpel unto you at the firſt. And my temptation which was in my fleſh ye deſpiſed not, nor rejected, but received me as an angel of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus.* And I'll tell you a little, Beloved, for the ſtirring of you up to prize a Goſpel-Miniſtry, what uſe Chriſt is pleaſed to make of us, in order to this Freedom (though we are but earthen Veſſels, and poor Creatures like your ſelves) As,

1. To be. *Publiſhers* of it among you. He commands us and ſends us to blow this Trumpet of the Goſpel in your hearing, to proclaim this joyful ſound to you, *that Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners.* We are bound, as we will anſwer to Chriſt, to acquaint you with this good news, that *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf:* that now is the time wherein priſon-doors may be opened, and the yoke of your ſpiritual Bondage may be broken all to

pieces: and oh, how ſhould you welcome us in the Name of the Lord, for bringing you ſuch a Meſſage as this is! Such an Entertainment doth the Prophet foretel the Preachers of the Goſpel ſhould receive; ſee *Iſa.* 52. 7. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publiſheth peace*, &c. Beloved, I am ſure that the news of this Deliverance, cannot but be welcome to thoſe that are ſenſible of their Bondage: See *Exod.* 3. 16, 17. *q. d. Moſes*, go and publiſh this among them, that I will deliver them out of this ſad ſlavery that they are in. Now compare *chap.* 4. 29, 30, 31. where the Meſſage was delivered to them: you ſee how they imbraced it, *they believed*, *bowed their heads*, *and worſhipped.*

2. To be *Pleaders* with you about it. The Lord gives us leave to be exceeding earneſt with you about the matters of your ſouls, to ſtir you up by all the Wayes and by all the Arguments that poſſibly we can, to look after this Freedom. He requires, that we ſhould lay out the very ſtrength of our ſpirits in this Work; that we ſhould deal with you as for our lives, and as for the ſaving of our own ſouls. He would have

have us ſtudy what to ſay to you, and to pray much to God, that he would fill our mouths with Arguments when we come to ſpeak to you; and that he would help us, that we may not be willing to let you alone in your trifling careleſs delayes; but to urge upon you the neceſſity of this Freedom, and the danger of miſſing of it, and the benefit that you will reap by it. Miniſters ſhould not only be Publiſhers, but they ſhould be Pleaders, yea, Beſeechers of their hearers in this matter: *We pray you in Chriſts ſtead* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *be ye reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 20.

3. To be *Inſtruments for the conveying* of it to you. Through grace, Beloved, we can help you to Chriſt, and help you to Freedom: Thus the man of *Macedonia* that appeared to *Paul* in a Viſion, prayed him, ſaying, *Come over and help us*, Act. 16. 9. Poor ſinners need help for their ſouls, and God hath made his Miniſters helpers; they can help them to Knowledge, and Repentance, and Faith, and out of their Sins, and help them to Heaven. He hath given them Gifts and graces for it, and a Scripture-call to the Work; and he hath put a willingneſs in their hearts to do good to ſouls: and he hath, and doth give ſucceſs and bleſſing

bleſſing to the word of his grace by them, and *by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe*, 1 Cor. 1. 21. So that Chriſt is here ſtill by his Embaſſadors. But,

2. Which is more than this, He is here by his *Spirit*; and as long as that is here, there is no fear but Freedom may be gotten. This is the great Succeſſor to Jeſus Chriſt, in that work of doing good to ſouls, *Joh.* 16. 7, 8, 9, *&c.* I beſeech you conſider, that the *Spirit* doth attend the preaching of the Goſpel, and therefore 'tis called the Miniſtration of the *Spirit*; and what that can do in our preaching, you may ſee, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6.——*the Spirit giveth life.* And were it not for the preſence of this Spirit of Chriſt in his Ordinances, both our preaching and your hearing would be in vain. But now, becauſe Chriſt hath ſent his Embaſſadors, and ſends his Spirit alſo with them, I tell you, Beloved, you are under a glorious Miniſtration, 2 *Cor.* 3. 7, 8, 9, *&c.* becauſe whatever *veil* is upon peoples hearts, and whatever bondage they are in, this Spirit can *take it away, and bring them into liberty*, verſ. 16, 17. But I muſt haſten.

The

The 3*d* Inquiry is, *Upon what account Chriſt doth offer this freedom, in reſpect of himſelf?* I will give you an anſwer to this in three things.

1. Upon the account of his *Purchaſe:* he hath purchaſed Freedom, and therefore he may offer it; 'tis his own to diſpoſe of, as a thing that a man hath bought is his own: the Lord Jeſus was willing to buy Freedom for you, that he might give it to you. And here, it may be, you may deſire to be reſolved in two Queſtions. *Qu.* 1. Of whom did Chriſt buy it? *Qu.* 2. And what did Chriſt pay for it? *Anſ.* to the 1. He bought this Freedom at the hand of his Fathers Juſtice: for by ſin we were all fallen into the hand of Juſtice, and out of that hand we could not be taken, but by Chriſts making full Satisfaction to it; therefore he had to deal with a juſt and an angry God in this buſineſs. This is the meaning of that, in *Gal.* 4. 4, 5.——*God ſent forth his ſon made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* Mark here how 'twas with us, and how it muſt be with Chriſt, that he might redeem us. We were under the Law, *i. e.* we lay liable to all that the Law could

could threaten to us, or inflict upon us: And therefore, Christ he must be, and he was made under the Law; *i. e.* in what he was to do for our Deliverance, he must give the Law or the Justice of God its full demand: and he must not expect to have any thing abated of it, by any such thing as mercy; for he had not at all to deal with that in this work, he was not made *under Mercy*, but *under the Law*. Now from hence we may quickly give an answer to the 2*d Question*, What did Christ pay for this Freedom? *Anſ.* Why to be sure some great price, since he had to do with the offended and inraged Justice of God. For you must know and believe, that for our sins, the wrath of God was dreadfully kindled against us: and if Christ would put himself in our place, and be our Redeemer, all this wrath must dreadfully burn against him; he must suffer so, as that he must be made a *curse* for us; and he must be so bruised and broken, and marred by the heavy weight of Punishment that lay upon him, that people might even be astonished to see him, and so as to make him that he could not even be known who he was, he looked so ghastly. See *Isa.* 52. 14. and therefore, his precious Life and Blood must

muſt go for it; *Body*, *Soul* and all muſt be filled with the tokens of God's diſpleaſure. And therefore, you ſhall find the Lord, as it were, *ſtirring up* of his Juſtice, as if that it ſelf were too ſlow, againſt him, when his ſufferings are ſpoken of, *Zech.* 13. 7. *Awake, O ſword, againſt my ſhepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow.* Oh Beloved, the great worth that there is in one drop of Chriſts Blood! but in this Work, he muſt *pour it out like water*: See *Pſal.* 22. 14, 15. And therefore, I pray obſerve this, that generally when you have this Redemption of Chriſt ſpoken of, his *Blood* is mentioned with it, to ſhew what an ineſtimable price he paid for it. See *Zech.* 9. 11. *As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant,*—— *Eph.* 1. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood.* Heb. 9. 11, 12.——*By his own blood*—1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,* — *but with the precious blood of Chriſt*——

2. Upon the account of his *Pity*. The Pity and tender Compaſſion that was in the heart of Chriſt towards poor ſinners, as he ſaw them lie in their loſt condition; he ſaw they needed Deliverance, and he could not paſs him by, as this and that man did the man that lay among thieves; but as

as the good *Samaritan*; he would go to them to pour in Wine and Oil into their Wounds, and bind them up. Do you think, Beloved, that ever Christ would have indured, that such cruelty from his Enemies, and such severity from his Fathers Justice, should have been exercised upon him, if he had not had his heart full of pity towards poor sinners, as it could hold? Certainly, 'twas his mercy that made him undergo all that misery. See *Heb.* 5. 1, 2. *Tit.* 3. 4. Beloved, Jesus Christ saw that we were *pitiful* creatures by sin, and by reason of what was due to us for sin, and he did pity us, *Isa.* 63. 9.—*In his pity he redeemed them*: Yea, and he doth pity us still, and he hath compassion for poor sinful creatures still, *Heb.* 4. 15. *We have not an high Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.* Therefore his pity to you makes him, that he cannot but offer this Liberty to you.

3. Upon the account of his *Power*. He offers this Freedom to sinners, because he can set them free; how fast soever they are bound, he can loose them. Hence 'tis said, *Psal.* 89. 19. *I have laid help upon one that is mighty.* As the Lord, when he came to redeem *Israel* out of their Bondage in *Egypt*,

*Egypt*, he came with a mighty hand, and with a ſtretched out arm: So doth Chriſt, when he comes to redeem a ſoul; let him meet with what he will in his way, he carries all before him; where he will deliver, he *will* deliver, down goes all that ſtands againſt him. The ſinner at firſt, and Satan with him, they do what they can to make good their Fortifications againſt him, to keep out ſuch a Word from entring, and ſuch a Conviction from faſtning; and it ſets up its own carnal plea's, and excuſes, and delaies, and ſelf-righteouſneſs, *&c.* and all to keep out Chriſt from ſetting up his Throne: but all before he hath done, tumbles like a Babel, and crumbles into duſt before him. 'Tis true, there is a great deal of ſtrength put out againſt him; the ſinner calls all his ſhifts together, and the devil calls all his devices together to reſiſt, but Chriſt is reſolved to have the day. And therefore, mark how he is deſcribed as one, that goes forth with invincible Power in this Work, *Pſal.* 45. 3, 4, 5. So *Rev.* 6. 2. *He went forth conquering, and to conquer.* Beloved, we muſt offer this Freedom to you, tho we of our ſelves have no power to prevail with you; but he in whoſe Name we come, he can break your gates of Braſs, and cut in ſunder your bars of Iron. *Uſe.*

*Uſe.* And now, doth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt offer this Liberty to you? Oh then, I beſeech you, let it be accepted of you. Oh Beloved, 'tis offered to this end, that it ſhould be accepted: 'tis not that it ſhould be made light of, as if there were no great matter in it, whether you had it, or had it not. I therefore urge that Scripture upon you now, *Heb.* 12. 25. *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: For if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from heaven.* What, ſhall Chriſt make ſuch an offer to you, and will you not cloſe with it? Will you that are in Bondage periſh in your Bondage, when you might be ſet free? Is it ſuch a good condition that you are in, that you ſhould deſire to ſtay in it? The priſon and bondage of the Body, tho it be nothing to this that your ſouls are in, yet how glad are poor Creatures to hear, that there is any hope or way for deliverance out of that. Oh, ſirs, let not Chriſt loſe his love, let him not loſe his labour, let him not loſe his longing: fain he would have you ſet at liberty: And therefore, don't hug your chains, as if you were loth to part with them.

them. Lay this to your heart, that Freedom is offered you; how can you ſhift it, but you muſt cloſe with it now? If it had not been offered, there had been ſome excuſe: but will you put it off, now it hath been offered; yea, when it hath been offered *particularly* to every one of you, that there is none of you have been excluded from this gracious Invitation: and when it hath been offered with a *notwithſtanding*, notwithſtanding all the great and grievous ſins which you have lived in, as it was ſaid to *Judah*, *Jer* 3. 1, 2. *Thou haſt played with many lovers: yet return to me, ſaith the Lord:* And when it hath been offered *frequently*, not once or twice, but often; *How often would I have gathered you*, ſaith Chriſt to *Jeruſalem*? God hath ſeen you neglect this Salvation, ſuch a Sermon, and ſuch a Sermon; and yet he hath ſent again, and again, and again to you: And when it hath been offered with ſo much *importunity* and *earneſtneſs*, that you have never been pleaded with about any thing in this World, as you have about getting this Freedom: And when it hath been offered to you ſo *freely*, that you ſhall be redeemed at anothers coſt, and not at your own: you have ſold your ſelves for nought, and

ye ſhall be redeemed without price: I ſay, when it hath been offered, and thus offered, why what's your duty from all this, but to cloſe with it? 1. Cloſe with it *thankfully*. What? Is there yet Freedom for *me*, for ſuch a one as I? Oh, bleſſed be God! admired be his Mercy! adored be his Name! 2. Cloſe with it *throughly*. Take heed of doing it by halves: take heed of parting with your ſins but as *Pharaoh* would part with the children of *Iſrael*; he would yield to this and that upon force, but he never came up to Gods terms. 3. Cloſe with it *quickly*, before your day of Grace be at an end, before it be too late to look out for it. Oh, ſirs! ſtir, ſtir for your ſouls, for the Lords ſake, quickly, quickly; you may elſe be undone to all eternity. Opportunities of grace are not long liv'd; and when they are over, you will wiſh you had improved them, and then there will be no fetching them back. I commend that awakening Scripture to you, *Heb.* 12. 15, 16, 17. *Look diligently, leſt any man fail of the grace of God, leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled: Leſt there be any fornicator, or profane perſon, as Eſau, who for one morſel of meat, ſold his birth-right.*

*For*

*For ye know, how that afterward, when he would have inherited the bleſſing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears.* That may be loſt in a little time, that can never be recovered.

But becauſe this cloſing with Chriſt is a great Subject, and of ſo great importance; and becauſe I know there is a great deal of backwardneſs in the heart of man to cloſe with Chriſt; and for fear leſt you ſhould not have as much ſaid to you as can well be ſpoken by man, to perſwade you to accept of this ſoul-delivering Jeſus whom I preach unto you this day: give me leave to carry on the *Uſe* ſomewhat further, by way of motive. And tho many things might be inſiſted on to ſtir you up, yet I will ſingle out this one thing eſpecially: namely, to beſeech you to conſider how guilty you will be if you don't cloſe with Chriſt; and what grievous ſinners you are, and will be found to be at the great day of his appearing.

1. You are guilty of *Ignorance.* You'll ſhew your ignorance of Chriſt, that his worth and excellency was never ſeen by you, that you never took him to be a Pearl of great Price; for if you had, to be ſure

the next thing would have been to make him yours, *Matth.* 13. 45, 46. Beloved, there is none that ever refused Christ, that knew him; I don't mean, that knew him after the flesh, or that saw him with the eye of the body; there were many that beheld him so, and had no desire to him, *Joh.* 1. 10, 11. but none that ever knew him in a spiritual manner, but fell in love with him: He draws all the hearts, and all the affections of them to whom he hath been revealed by the Holy Ghost. It is therefore certain, that you dwell in darkness to this day, if you have no mind to close with Christ; for if you were brought into the light, you would follow him.

2. You are guily of *unthankfulness*. What! to make such a sad requital to Christ for all his kindness towards you, as to prepare such good things for you, and now to have none of them! Why, hath he not deserved better at your hands then this? Was there no love, nor no mercy to your souls in what Christ hath done for poor sinners? Nay, did you ever hear of the like love, or the like mercy? Is it not beyond all comparison, and beyond all expression? Did you ever hear of a Saviour that delivered from so great danger? Did

Did you ever hear of a Surety that undertook to pay ſuch great Debts? Did you ever hear of a Phyſician that healed ſuch great Diſeaſes? What, and ſhall this be all the thanks he ſhall have now, to be rejected? If God will take it ill at your hands, to paſs by thoſe mercies that are but for the comfort of your bodies, without thankfulneſs; how much more will he be diſpleaſed with you, for paſſing by the offers of thoſe mercies that are for the ſalvation of your Souls? Why, Sirs, you that refuſe Chriſt, where is your ſenſe of God's goodneſs? where is that acknowledgement that he ſhould have from you? Hath he done you no courteſie in ſending his Son? Is the very hopes and poſſibility of being recovered out of your loſt condition, a thing not to be *at all* affected with? If a man doth but offer you his help in your need, you'll thank him, and you'll ſhew that you are taken with his kindneſs, by accepting of it; and you'll tell him how much you are beholding to him, and that you ſhall own him for your Friend as long as you live. Why, where is your thankfulneſs to Chriſt then? why don't you own him for your Friend? *Obj.* Why, you'll ſay perhaps, We are

thankful to Chriſt for his kindneſs to poor ſinners? *Anſ.* What, and not cloſe with him? how can that be? 'tis the cloſing with him that is the thankfulneſs to him. If you do not this, you may ſay you are thankful, but who will believe it? ſhew it by your acceptance, *Col.* 1. 1, 2. *Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light.* They give thanks; but ſee *verſ.* 14. they had cloſed with it; *We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveneſs of ſins.*

3. You are guilty of *Willfulneſs.* It may be you'll put it upon your weakneſs that you don't cloſe with Chriſt: and I grant indeed that you are without ſtrength, and that you muſt have a power beyond your own to inable you, *Joh.* 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him:* and if ever you come to him, it muſt be by grace from above. But yet, I pray conſider, that it is ſuch a weakneſs, as is joined with *wilfulneſs*, *Joh.* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.* The great thing that hinders your cloſing with Chriſt is, *your will is againſt it.* I am certain, that if you were but willing, you would do it: only you

you muſt know what a willingneſs I mean; Such a willingneſs as is ſpoken of in *Pſal.* 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.* Oh, if the power of Chriſt were but once come upon your wills, to turn them, and bring them in, you would run to him with ſtrong and ſwift deſires. If ſinners were not willful in refuſing of Chriſt, do you think that God would ever charge them with willfulneſs? *How oft would I have gathered you?* &c. *and ye* would not, ſaith our Saviour of the Jews, *Matth.* 23. 37. A wicked man carries it ſo to Chriſt, as that 'tis plain he is unwilling to have him. He laies it upon his weakneſs, and he thinks thereby to come off the better: I *cannot* repent, ſaith he, and 'tis true, God ſaith ſo too: and I *cannot* pleaſe God, and God ſaith ſo too, *Rom.* 8. 8. and yet this ſhall not excuſe him; for there is a *will not*, with his *cannot*. If he were only weak, and *deſirous* to come, and did not oppoſe and reſiſt the motions and ſtrivings of the Spirit, and the calls of Grace, 'twere ſomething; if he were faithfull in the uſe of that natural Power that he hath, though indeed he wants a ſpiritual Power, 'twere ſomething. But alas! he doth not like Chriſts terms, and Chriſts yoke; his *will* is againſt them.

4. You are guilty of the *love* of sin; not only of sinning, but of *loving* of sin. By your not closing with Christ, you declare that you have some beloved Lust or other which you cannot indure to part with; and *that* takes up those affections and that delight which should be set upon Christ. Sirs, tho I cannot see nor search your hearts, yet thus much I know of that which is within you, that you who stand out against Christ, have something in the Throne that should not be there. There is, as sure as can be, some darling-reigning sin; if there were not, Christ and you would quickly make up a Match. *Obj.* But how can you tell this, since you don't know our hearts? *Answ.* Why, we know it, because God hath told us so in his Word, that 'tis by reason of some unmortified sin that people don't close with Christ; they have bosom'd up some dear corruption or other. I ground it upon that Scripture in *Gal.* 5. 24. *They that are Christs, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* Mark, if this be a sign that persons are come to Christ, That the flesh with the affections and lusts are crucified in them; then the reason why they don't come to Christ, is because there are uncrucified affections and lusts in them;

they

they have ſome Idol in their hearts, to which they bow down and worſhip. And therefore, let me allude to that Scripture, *Act.* 3. 14. where *Peter* is dealing with the Jews about their ſtanding out againſt Chriſt, *But ye denied the holy One, and the Juſt, and deſired a murderer to be granted unto you.* Beloved, every unmortified reigning luſt is a *murderer*, a *murderer* of your ſouls; and now, what's the reaſon that you don't own and cloſe with this holy and juſt One, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Why, 'tis becauſe you deſire that this *murderer* ſhould be granted unto you: As the People there in *Matth.* 8. 32. with 34. that they might keep their Swine, they beſought Chriſt *that he would depart out of their coaſts.* So you would keep your ſwiniſh Luſts.

5. You will be guilty of *Pride.* Oh, in what pride of heart do you walk, that reject the Grace of GOD! You have high thoughts of your ſelves; certainly you take your ſelves to be what you are not, as Chriſt ſaith to them of *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 17. *Thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing: and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Pray give me leave to be free with you: Why,

Sirs,

Sirs, you that ſtand out againſt thoſe Calls of Grace, why are you ſo proud? Soul, what art thou, that thou lookeſt ſo coy upon Jeſus Chriſt? I would faln have thee underſtand thy ſelf a little: Why, I pray thee conſider, what Portion is Jeſus Chriſt like to have with thee, if he ſhould have thee? What canſt bring to him? Canſt thou bring any thing to him but a broken, ruin'd, undone condition? 'Tis true, thou haſt a deal of thine own, but what is it? A *deal of ſin*, a *deal of miſery*, a *deal of deformity*, a *deal of poverty*: If theſe things will make thee rich, thou haſt enough of them; but as for any thing elſe, thou haſt it not, nothing at all to render thee deſirable or lovely in Chriſts eyes: and yet doth he offer love to thee, and woo thee as heartily, as if thou wert ſome great and excellent perſon, and hadſt riches, and beauty, and worthineſs, (tho, alas! if ever he have thee, he muſt clothe thee from top to toe) And yet, wilt thou refuſe him? why, I marvel at thy Pride! You know, 'tis counted an odious thing by the common Proverb that goes among us, to be *Poor* and *Proud*: ſo ſinner, what, art ſo Proud, and yet art ſo Poor! The Lord in mercy ſhew thee what thou art.

6. You

6. You will be guilty of *Cruelty* to your ſelves. I might ſtand upon that of Cruelty to us the Miniſters of Chriſt, who take all this pains with you, *as though God did beſeech you by us, to pray you in Chriſts ſtead to be reconciled unto God.* Beloved, if we ſhould ſpend our ſtrength and ſpirits (as we do) in earneſt intreaties of you to cloſe with Chriſt, and you ſhould not be perſwaded, would you not ſhew in this, a great deal of hardneſs of heart againſt Chriſt's Embaſſadors, in ſuffering them to weary, and wear out themſelves in pleading with you to repent, and believe the Goſpel, and all in vain? I tell you, the account of this will lie heavy upon you another day; that you ſhould let our Strength, and Spirit, and Labours run to waſte. You muſt needs think, that the pains that the Miniſters of Chriſt take with you in this kind of work, are very ſpending to their outward man: their Strength is not the ſtrength of Stones, nor their Fleſh of Braſs; therefore, there ſhould be ſome pity towards them, and you ſhould not, by your delays and backwardneſs to imbrace their Meſſage, put a kind of neceſſity upon them, even to lay out themſelves beyond their ſtrength.

But

But now, to come nearer to you; What Cruelty do you ſhew to your ſelves, by not cloſing with Chriſt? Saith *Wiſdom* (that is Chriſt himſelf), *Prov.* 8. 36. *He that ſinneth againſt me, ſinneth againſt his own ſoul.* The great hurt of all, is that which you do your ſelves: by refuſing of Chriſt, you are with your own hands making weapons of Death to deſtroy your ſelves. If you would ſtudy which way in all the World to do your ſelves the greateſt miſchief, 'tis in this, to neglect *this great Salvation.* I tell you, In this you take the ſhorteſt curt that can be, to manifeſt that you have no greater enemy than your ſelves: And this is the reaſon why the Lord will condemn at the laſt day, every Chriſt-refuſing ſinner, for *ſelf deſtruction.* Oh, Sirs, you are not in a right ſenſe ſelf-lovers, till you are Chriſt-receivers. 'Tis true, you have a carnal ſelf love; but that's but a love to ſin, 'tis not a love to the ſoul: and therefore, 'tis not the right ſelf-love, which teacheth one to look after ones own everlaſting Salvation, next to the Glory of GOD.

7. You'll be guilty of *undervaluing the higheſt mercies.* Conſider, you are offered as precious things as God himſelf can give to his Creatures: what can he give more than

than Himſelf, and his Son and Spirit, his everlaſting Love, and everlaſting Life, his Pardon, his Promiſes? Why, you'll be found deſpiſers of all theſe, if you don't come to Chriſt. And what, is it nothing in your account to be a Child of God? to have all your ſins blotted out? to be juſtified, and ſanctified, and ſaved? Is it nothing to be delivered from the curſe of God, and the wrath to come? Methinks you ſhould be dealing with your own thoughts a little thus: Why, what? ſhall I let theſe great things go? a *great* God, and a *great* Saviour, and a *great* Reward? Certainly, Friends, if you *undervalue* theſe things, 'tis becauſe you *overvalue* other things; you overvalue your ſins, and you overvalue the world, and you overvalue your own righteouſneſs. If you could but count theſe loſs, you would count Chriſt to be gain, *Phil.* 3. 7.

8. You'll be guilty of *Hypocriſie.* What! do you come hither, and ſeem to be a people that would cloſe with Chriſts offers of Grace; and yet, when all comes to all, you will not do it? What Hypocriſie, what double dealing is this? You put us in hope, by your attendance upon the Means, that you will give up your ſelves to Chriſt; and

and upon this account, we are glad to see every one of you here, hoping that you will be willing to list your selves into the number of Christ's true Disciples: and now, what, won't you be sincere? Shall your faces be towards him, and your hearts against him? Will you not be as you seem? Pray be down-right with us; give in *your Souls* to what you are about. This is no place to dissemble with God, and with his Ordinances: and therefore, as in 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. *Laying aside all guile and hypocrisies, As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*

9. You'll be guilty of *Unbelief.* You that close not with Christ, you believe him not. We tell you, *he came into the world to save sinners*; we tell you, that there is mercy, and pardon, and life for you, if you come unto him; but you believe not our report: if you close not with him, you believe not the Scripture, you believe not the Gospel; See 1 *Joh.* 5. 9. *This is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.* Shall God testifie these things concerning Christ which we preach to you, and shall he not be believed? Will you make God a liar? *vers.* 10.

10. You'll be guilty of *Foolishness.* What?

What? not to accept of an offer that is so much for your good? Is there any wisdom in this? Do you use to do thus about the things of the World? *Come eat of my bread,—Forsake the foolish,*—Prov. 9. 5,6. Observe here, we shall be among the fools, till we close with Christ.

11. You'll be guilty of *Presumption.* You talk of your hope to be saved, what? and not close with Christ? Why, 'tis high presumption in you; a tempting, a daring of God.

12. You'll be guilty of *Unprofitableness.* Why, till you close with Christ, what good do you do? This is that which must enter you into a holy, fruitful life; without this, you have not laid the foundation of any spiritual walking. Glorifying of God begins here; hence it is that People get no good under Ordinances; do no good, upon a spiritual account, in their Places and Generation; why they are out of Christ yet, from whom they should draw virtue and strength to bring forth fruit unto God.

And so I have done with the second Branch of the Doctrine, *That Christ offers Freedom to poor sinners that are in the house of Bondage.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Wherein is handled the* third Branch *of the Doctrine*, viz. *That* it is every ones duty to look after a ſhare in this Freedom.

THe third Branch of the Doctrine (which I now come to) is, That *it is every ones duty to look after a ſhare in this Freedom, by getting a particular and perſonal Intereſt in it*; that ſo we may be of the Corporation or Society of thoſe whom the Son hath made free. And before I go any further, I would ſhew a little, that this is our duty, though we be never ſo great ſinners. The greatneſs of your ſins muſt not hinder or diſcourage any of you from looking after it: you muſt not ſay, It is in vain for me to think or hope that ever I ſhall have it, who am ſuch a grievous ſinner. The Lord humble thee that art ſuch a grievous ſinner, and make thee as ſenſible of it as thou haſt need to be. My work is not to go about to perſwade thee to the contrary, but rather to

aſſure

assure thee that it is so indeed. And if thou speakest so from thy heart, and from an inward sense and feeling of the burden of sin, 'tis well. There be many grievous sinners, that are not grieved with their sins: great *sinfulness* and great *insensibleness*, is the general condition of the World; but as great a sinner as thou art, thou must look after this Freedom. The greater ones Sickness is, the more need to send for the Physician. Do not thou conclude thou shalt never be free, because thou art so much in bondage; whatever comes of it, *look out* for Deliverance. Pray mark; There be two things that we are greatly to take heed of, about the grace of God by Christ.

1. That we don't *despise* it. Oh! how many be there, that make no more of Christ and Salvation by him, than they do of a straw? 'Tis wonderful to see, how the most do cast all the things of God behind their backs: and the reason why they do so, is not because there is no worth in the things, but because they do not see the worth of them. But I do but name this.

2. That we don't *despair of it*, whatever our sins have been. The truth is, amongst those whom we preach to, there be no-

thing near ſo many of this latter ſort, as there be of the firſt. Oh! there's a multitude of deſpiſers and ſlighters of Chriſt and his Freedom: theſe may go where they will, for any thing that many care for them. But becauſe ſometimes we may meet with one here and there, that will be ready to ſpeak in a very diſcouraged way, as if it were to no purpoſe at all for them to look out for this Freedom, by reaſon of the greatneſs of their ſins: therefore I would ſay a little, to take away this hopeleſsneſs that ſome may have in them. As,

1. That this Freedom was *intended for ſinners*, and grievous ſinners, *Rom.* 5. 6. *In due time Chriſt died for the ungodly.* Ver. 8. —*While we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* 1 Tim. 1. 15. *Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners.* Luk. 19. 10. *The Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.* You ſee 'twas intended for them that were *ungodly*, for *ſinners*, for them that were *loſt*. God *ſent* Chriſt to be Saviour to ſuch; and Chriſt *meant* ſuch in what he did in the work of Redemption. If we had been without ſin, we ſhould not have needed that Chriſt ſhould have died for us: why then ſhould our ſins hinder us from looking out for this Freedom,

dom, ſince the aim, and thoughts, and heart of Chriſt was towards us to do us good, upon this very conſideration, that we were thoſe that lay in a ſinful and loſt eſtate; and that there were divers of us, to whom God did bear an everlaſting love, and ſo ſuch of us were given by the Father to Chriſt, to be redeemed out of that miſerable condition. *Obj.* But you'll ſay, Chriſt intended all this for Believers; and they are none but Believers that ſhall have the good of what Chriſt hath done. *Anſ.* That's very ſure, *He that believes ſhall be ſaved, and he that believeth not ſhall be damned*, in reſpect of what they were to be afterwards: So 'tis none but Believers that ſhall reap the ſaving benefit of his Redemption; but at firſt, and in reſpect of Chriſts dying for them, they were Sinners before they were Believers; and ſo Chriſt dyed for them, not as Believers, but as they were Sinners; tho 'tis true, 'twas as they were *choſen Sinners*, and ſo to be *made Believers*. [ I know, that what I am now hinting, would give me a very fair opportunity to ſhew you, that therefore Chriſt did not intentionally die for *all* Sinners; and that the Doctrine of *univerſal Grace* or *Redemption* is to be taken heed of. But if any

deſire it, I had rather give them ſatisfaction in private, if they pleaſe to bring their Objections, than needleſsly to ſpend time about it now, ſince I do not know whether any of you that hear me, are of that Perſwaſion.] That which I now drive at is, that your ſins muſt not diſcourage you from labouring after a ſhare in this Freedom, ſince Chriſt was intended for *Sinners*, tho not for *all* Sinners. Thou that art a great Sinner, art in the very caſe for which Chriſt was ſent to give Salvation to; and thy Miſery ſhould not make thee deſpair of a Remedy, but ſtir thee up to look out for it.

2. If thou art a great ſinner already, then thou ſhouldſt not make thy ſelf a greater ſinner, which hopeleſsneſs will do. It is the fruit of deſpair, that it makes him that is very ſinful, to be always growing worſe: There is leſs and leſs hope of one that caſts away hope; and many would ſooner be recovered, if they did not conclude they ſhould never be recovered. A deſpairing ſoul is going on to further wickedneſs: I will give you two notable Scriptures for it, *Jer.* 2. 25. *Thou ſaidſt there is no hope. No, for I have loved ſtrangers, and after them will I go.* And *chap.* 18. 20.

*And*

*And they ſaid there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.* What was their ſtrong reſolution to go on in their ſins grounded upon? What made them, that as bad as they were, they would ſtill be worſe? Why, they ſaid, *there is no hope.* Oh! however thou haſt ſinned, don't ſhut up the door of Mercy againſt thy ſelf; for then thou openeſt the door wide to more ſin ſtill. There's nothing doth more harden the heart, than deſpair doth; the more this is is increaſed, the more ſin is ſtrengthned. A deſpairing ſinner will grow a deſperate ſinner; he will not care how much he ſins. They that think they have ſinned themſelves paſt mercy, will fill up their ſins apace. 'Tis the hope of finding mercy, that muſt bring us back to the fear of God; without that, a man will caſt off all at once, and think that he cannot ſin too much. And no doubt, this is that which makes ſome in the world to be ſo exceedingly prophane as they are, and to be the wonders of the Age they live in, for monſtrous iniquity, that they carry themſelves as if they were turned into devils, and would even dare God to damn them. Why, 'tis like, if one could ſee

how 'tis within them, that they have, through God's juſt Judgment upon them, a ſecret miſ-giving of heart that they ſhall never be ſaved, they have taken up that deſperate Concluſion, and thereupon they harden themſelves to exceſſive ungodlineſs, and live as tho they had bid defiance to all ſober Converſation. That perſon blocks up his own way to repentance for ſin, that caſts off the hope of being forgiven. See *Pſal.* 130. 4. *There is forgiveneſs with thee that thou mayeſt be feared.* That which brings us to the fear of God, is the hope of finding *forgiveneſs* with him. And therefore 'tis a very ſad thing, and much to be prayed againſt, to be delivered up to a hopeleſs heart; and they that have provoked God by ſinning much already, do provoke him more by deſpairing of mercy.

3. 'Tis all one to Free Grace, whether thou art a great ſinner or a little one. God can pardon abundantly, tho thou haſt ſinned abundantly: do but forſake thy ſins, and then, need as much pardon s thou wilt, thou ſhalt have it, *Iſa.* 55. 7. The infinite mercy of God knows well enough what to do with a great ſinner: that's a notable place, *Rom.* 5. 20. *Where ſin abound-*

*ed,*

*ed; grace did much more abound.* Mark what words are here; he doth not say barely, where there was sin *committed*, but where sin *abounded*; nor only, there grace was *manifested*, but there it *abounded*, yea, and abounded *more* than sin abounded, yea and *much* more. 'Tis much that a sinner can sin, but 'tis more that God can pardon; *Isa.* 1.18. *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* He makes but a *though* of scarlet and crimson sins: he brings it in twice with that word *though*, *and though*; as if he should say, My mercy is not posed for all this. Whatever Mercy will do, it doth it without difficulty. You know, there be some things that you can do with ease; small matters you make nothing of them: but then there be some other things, that though you can do them, yet 'tis difficulty; you must put out all that is in you, all your skill and all your strength: but so needs not God to pardon the greatest sinner; that is, he can do it with ease. In some sense, it is harder to God to punish, than it is to pardon. When he comes to punish, he speaks as if 'twere hard to him, *Hos.* 11.8. *How shall I give thee up, O*

*Ephraim*, &c. But when he comes to pardon, 'tis ſpoken of him as if that were eaſie, *Mic.* 7. 18. *who delighteth in mercy:* and what we *delight* in, we do with eaſe.

4. Tho thou art a great ſinner, yet thou art not a ſinner in *hell*; thou art a ſinner upon earth ſtill. And there is this difference betwixt ſinners upon earth, and ſinners in hell; that the firſt are yet under hope, while the others are paſt it. It is thy great miſery, that thou art yet among the *unconverted*; but 'tis great mercy, that thou art not among the *damned*. The place in which thou yet art, is the place of *repentance*, and not of *puniſhment*. We muſt look upon no ſinners as paſt hope, that are not paſt this life: Why, thou liveſt yet; Chriſt hath not denounced the final ſentence againſt thee; thou haſt not yet ſtood before his Judgment-ſeat, and heard him ſay to thee, *Depart thou curſed into everlaſting fire.* What is the patience and long-ſuffering of God towards thee for, but to ſhew thee that thy condition is yet recoverable? 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. It is enough to anſwer thy deſpairing thoughts, to tell thee, that yet *the Lord waits to be gracious.* Doſt thou not ſee how God doth lengthen out the

the thread of thy life day after day? He could ſnatch thee away in an inſtant, but yet he continues thee where thou haſt Calls, and Means, and Opportunities for the good of thy Soul. Why, 'tis not thus with thoſe that are in Hell; they are beyond all help, and beyond all hope; but thou art not, through the riches of the goodneſs of God. The great thing that thou wanteſt, is but a heart to know the things of thy Peace, in the day of thy Viſitation.

5. The cloſing with this Freedom which Chriſt offers thee, may make thee as *great a Saint*, as now thou art a great Sinner: As it did *Paul*; what a Sinner was he before he cloſed with Chriſt; and what a Saint did he become afterwards? This Freedom will make a ſtrange alteration in thee, if thou getteſt but a ſhare in that. Such is the power and excellency of God's Grace, that where that comes in truth, it turns things upſide down; it makes an enemy to God, a friend of God; a hater of Goodneſs, to be a lover of Goodneſs, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. Art thou a great Sinner now? ay, but don't be out of hope for all that; for if thou once come in to Jeſus Chriſt, thou wilt be a new man. If now thou haſt an hard heart, this Freedom will break it;

it; if now thou haſt a ſtubborn will againſt God, this Freedom will make thee obedient; there is help in Chriſt againſt all this. It is very obſervable, that many times thoſe who have been the moſt forward for ſin, when the Lord hath wrought ſavingly in them, they have proved to be the moſt forward, and the moſt famous for Goodneſs: and God hath had no greater Inſtruments of his Glory in all the World, than ſome, who before they were converted, brought him moſt Diſhonour.

Well; all this now is ſpoken, to take away your hopeleſsneſs, that I may not have this ſtumbling-block in my way, while I would be calling upon you to look out for a ſhare in this Freedom, that any of you ſhould be under deſpairing thoughts about the getting of it, and ſo lye ſtill, and let all be as 'tis. You know, that man will hardly be brought to do much in a thing, concerning which, he deſpairs that it will never come to paſs. I would have you think, that the buſineſs of your Salvation (as great Sinners as any of you are) is a thing that through Grace may be effected. Why, Sirs, why may you not be *converted?* why may you not be *pardoned?* why may you not yet be *waſhed*, *and juſtified*, *and ſanctified*

*ſanctified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God?* Why may not as great Sinners be brought in yet, as have been brought in already? Methinks that Scripture would come in very ſeaſonably here, *Ezr.* 10. 2. *We have treſpaſſed againſt our God, and have taken ſtrange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Iſrael concerning this thing.* q. d. 'Tis very true, our provocations againſt God have been very great, and particularly in this, that *we have taken ſtrange wives of the people of the land,* (which was the ſin that they were now mourning for) yet, let us not ſit down hopeleſs now, and do nothing, and give up all for loſt: there's ſome hope left ſtill; and therefore (*ver.* 3) *Let's make a covenant—to put away all the wives*, &c. So now in your caſe, that are yet under the guilt of ſo many and ſo great iniquities, yet there is hope; and therefore, ſeek out for this Freedom by Chriſt. See *Zech.* 9. 12. *Turn ye to the ſtrong hold, ye priſoners of hope.* Tho thou art a *priſoner*, yet thou art *a priſoner of hope*; and therefore, *turn to the ſtrong hold*, turn to Chriſt. So that you ſee, I have made way to go on upon this now, to ſhew you, that *'tis every ones duty to look out after a ſhare in*

*this*

*this Freedom.* And there are two things among others, that make this to be your duty.

1. The *Command of God.* He hath commanded you to look out after Chriſt and your Souls: Friends, it is the will of him that made you, revealed in his bleſſed Word, that you ſhould come to Chriſt, and cloſe with Chriſt, and not refuſe the great and good things which he offers to you, *Matth.* 17. 5.——*Hear ye him.* Mark 1. 15.—*Repent and believe the Goſpel.* Act. 17. 30. *God commandeth all men every where to repent.* Heb. 12. 25. *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh*, &c. And as all the other Commands of God are backed with Promiſes to them that obey them, and with Threatnings to thoſe that do them not: So 'tis to be obſerved, in a ſpecial manner, concerning this Command of looking after Chriſt, and believing in him, with what precious Promiſes it is accompanied to thoſe that cloſe with Chriſt, and with what heavy Threatnings to thoſe that reject him. The *Command* it ſelf, you may take one place more for, which ſpeaketh the fulleſt of any yet; 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. *This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe in the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* Now for the *Promiſes*

*miſes*, they are ſo many that do belong to this, that I cannot name them all: See *Act.* 10. 43. and 13. 39, 40. for a taſte: And for Threatnings, *Act.* 3. 22. *Prov.* 1. 24. to the end: but only that the laſt *verſe* is a Promiſe of everlaſting ſafety to them that receive him. We ſhould therefore much awe our hearts with the ſtrict Commands that are about looking out for Chriſt, and hearkning to his Calls, and know, that the not accepting of Chriſt is the moſt damning ſin, *Joh.* 3. 18, 19. *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs rather than light, becauſe their deeds were evil.* The condemnation, as if there were none but this: And this ſin of not believing in Chriſt, is ſuch a great ſin, that when the Holy Ghoſt comes to work upon the heart, he doth, as it were, ſingle out this in a principal manner, to charge that upon the Conſcience, and to reprove and to convince for that to be ſure, *Joh.* 16. 8, 9. And this is a ſin which we muſt, and ſhall be moſt humbled for, if ever God intend mercy to us: and whatever other ſins we are ſmitten for, till the heart comes to be ſmitten for *this*, we fall ſhort of thoſe Convictions which the Spirit uſeth to give in,

in order to a true Converſion. Tho I don't ſay, that this is always the firſt ſin that the Spirit of God ſets before the Soul, and wounds it for (many times a man's inward trouble begins from ſome other ſins); yet ſooner or later, the guilt of this Unbelief is diſcovered to ſuch a ſoul, and from the ſight of that, it is brought to the deepeſt and the trueſt ſorrow, *Zech.* 12. 18.

2. The obligation that lies upon you, even by the very light of Nature, to look after *ſelf-preſervation.* Indeed there is a *ſelf* that we muſt not look after the preſervation of, but do all that we can to bring it to deſtruction; our *ſinful-ſelf*, or our Sins and Luſts, which are as dear to us, by corrupt nature, as our ſelves; this we muſt be ſworn enemies to, *Col.* 3. 5. *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth*, &c. And the reaſon is, becauſe this is not the *right ſelf*: our ſins are the Devils Bratts, and therefore they muſt be daſh'd againſt the walls; there muſt be no ſparing of them, no pleading for their life; for if you give ſin its life, you'll loſe your own: as the Prophet told *Ahab* from the Lord, concerning the King of *Syria*, that great enemy of the children of *Iſrael*, when the Lord had delivered him into *Ahab*'s hand, and he

he out of favour to him had let him eſcape, when he ſhould have deſtroyed him, 1 *Kin.* 20. 42. *Becauſe thou haſt let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter deſtruction; therefore thy life ſhall go for his life*, &c. So thus it will be to all you that ſpare your ſins, and ſtroak them, inſtead of ſtriking them; and becauſe they bring you a little pleaſure to the fleſh for the preſent, therefore they muſt be let alone. God hath put many opportunities into your hand for the deſtroying of them; every time you come to hear, you have, as it were, an advantage given you again: but it may be, that you ſo love this painted ſtrumpet, and are ſo overcome by the flatteries of it, that it is as Death to you to part with it. Well Soul, if thou wilt not have ſin to die, thou muſt die; if thou wilt not be the death of that, that will be the death of thee. But there is another *ſelf*, the *true ſelf*, or your ſelves as you are God's creatures, that you are bound to look after the preſervation of; that is, to ſpeak plainly, you muſt take care that you don't go the way to be eternally loſt, and to have Soul and Body caſt into hell. And if you are ſo careful, as you know you uſe to be, to preſerve your ſelves from the

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evils of this World, you do all that you can to keep your ſelves from Pains, and Priſons, and Poverty; why, will it not follow, that you ſhould be as careful, yea and much more (becauſe the Soul is more precious) to keep your ſelves from the *everlaſting pains*, and the *everlaſting priſon*, and the *everlaſting undoing?* Well then, you muſt look out for this Freedom by Chriſt, for otherwiſe theſe things will certainly come upon you, *Joh.* 3. 36. *He that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* And therefore, that man or woman that refuſes Chriſt, is not only no friend to Chriſt, but ſuch are no friends to themſelves, they have not the ttue *ſelf-love* in them, they don't love their own Souls. 'Tis ſaid of the Prodigal when he began to repent, he *came to himſelf*, Luk. 15. 17. He was gone from himſelf, the true ſelf before; but when he returned, then indeed he came to look out after ſelf-preſervation.

Well now, to proceed upon this Third Branch more throughly, *That it is every ones duty to look after a part in this Freedom:* I will, 1. give you an obſervable thing about it. 2. Shew you the reaſons and grounds why every one is to do this. 3. Make application.

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To the 1. There is one thing that is very obſervable about this in the Scripture, which I would commend unto you; and that is, That Chriſt, in the offers of his Grace, doth not only ſpeak in a general way to all in common, as if he ſhould ſay, Here 'tis *amongſt* you: but in many places he comes to offer it in a *particular* kind of Language, as if he had to deal with perſons ſeverally and apart one from another, and were ſingling of them out one by one: to teach us, that *every particular perſon muſt own it as his great duty, to look after Chriſt, and the Benefits that come by Chriſt for himſelf.* See *Joh.* 4. 10. Mark how particularly Chriſt ſpeaks here: *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her,* [*i. e.* the woman of *Samaria*] *If thou kneweſt the gift of God, and who it is that ſaith to* thee, *Give me to drink,* thou *wouldſt have asked of him, and he would have given* thee *living water.* So *Rev.* 3. 18. *I counſel* thee *to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that* thou *mayeſt be rich; and white raiment, that* thou *mayeſt be clothed, and that the ſhame of* thy *nakedneſs do not appear; and anoint* thine *eyes with eye-ſalve, that* thou *mayeſt ſee.* So *verſ.* 20. *If* any man *hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to* him, *and will ſup with* him, *and* he *with*

*me. q. d.* There muſt not be one of you, but muſt each for himſelf be labouring for a ſhare in theſe things.

Now for the reaſons of this, I deſire that you would ſeriouſly mind theſe four following.

1. Every one ſhould labour to have a ſhare in the Freedom, becauſe *every one hath had ſhare in the Bondage*; as the Apoſtle ſaith, in *Rom.* 5. 12. *Death paſſed upon* all *men, in that* all *have ſinned.* There's none of us can ſay concerning this Freedom, as *Paul* did concerning his being a partaker of the *Roman* Freedom, *Act.* 22. 28. *But I*, ſaith he, *was free-born.* • They that have this Freedom, are ſaid in Scripture to be *made free*; they are not *born free*, but *made* ſo, *Rom.* 6. 18. So in the Text, *If the Son ſhall make you free.* Now ſuppoſe, Beloved, that there were a company of People in the World, that had been all of them in great diſtreſs, or that they had been all taken by the Turks, and put to miſerable ſlavery, that never any poor Creatures had a harder condition than they; and ſuppoſe that it had been one of you that were of this number, that had a fellowſhip with them in their bitter Bondage: And that

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ſome merciful Prince, that knew of the lamentable caſe that theſe wretches were in, ſhould be willing, by the paying of a great Ranſom, to redeem them; and he layes down that which is demanded by him that held them in ſlavery, and ſo ſets this Company at liberty: at which, Oh, how their hearts rejoice! Only there is one amongſt them that won't accept of this favour, though his Captivity was as great as others, and he was as fair for deliverance as the reſt; he that ſet the other free, would have done it for him too, if he would not have been willful; but for his part, he would not have his liberty, he would lye and periſh in his thraldom. Why, what a fool and mad-man would he be counted, that would have his part in all the affliction which that Company hath indured, but would have none of their Redeemers kindneſs? Now, Sirs, you may go travel over all the World, and not find ſuch an inſtance as this for the Bondage of the Body: but we need not go far to find many ſuch inſtances for this Bondage of the Soul. Oh, how many be there that have been partakers of the Curſe, that don't look after the Bleſſing! that have been *Satans ſlaves*, but won't be the

*Lords free-men*! that had rather be *ſtrangers* and *foreigners* ſtill, than to be *fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the houſhold of God*?

*Reaſ.* 2. Becauſe *no man muſt reſt in the general offers of Grace, without a particular application of all to himſelf.* The general offers of Grace are like the hearing of ſome excellent Medicine, that is good for them that are under ſome dangerous Diſeaſe: now, 'tis not the hearing of this that will cure; but he that would have good by it, muſt get it for himſelf, and take it, and make uſe of it. You know, tho there be never ſo good a Plaiſter upon the Table for the healing of a Wound, it may be the Salve of which 'tis made, is the beſt in the World for ſuch a purpoſe; yet that won't help at all, if it be not applyed and laid on. So now, if you do not look after a particular ſhare in this Freedom, to bring it home to your own Souls, you do but reſt in the general notions of Grace. This is but the Plaiſter upon the Table, as it were; 'tis too far off to do you any good; thou haſt nothing for thy ſelf all this while. You know, there's a great deal of difference betwixt a mans ſaying, This is a brave Houſe, and, This Houſe is *mine*. So there

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is a precious Chriſt, and precious Freedom, and precious Promiſes; yea, but are they *thine?* Art thou one of them that can ſay, they are given *to us?* 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes.* Mark, he doth not ſay barely, theſe exceeding great and precious Promiſes are *given*, but given *to us.*

So that you don't come nigh enough to Chriſt, and the Benefits by Chriſt, if you don't get them for your ſelves. 'Tis the great ſin of Men and Women, that they ſit down in things at large about Chriſt: they know, and ſay, and read, that *Chriſt came into the World to ſave ſinners*, and *to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.* Ay, 'tis moſt true; yet what are you the better for all this, unleſs this Salvation be yours? And how can it be yours, without your labouring to make it yours?

Beloved, there be many that are, and will be undone for ever, becauſe they went no further than the hearing of a Chriſt at a diſtance. Now thoſe that ſhall be ſaved by him, he and their ſouls have been brought *nigh* together, and they make ſuch an application of him to themſelves, that the relation they have to him, is like that of the Members to the Head, or of the Wife to the

Husband; they are so joined to him by Faith, that they become one with him: now the general offers of Grace never make us one with Christ; till he is my Christ, I am never united to him. Now this is the great thing that you should look after, to have Union with Christ, and 'tis application that makes the Union; and you have nothing of him in a saving manner, till you are *in* him, and he *in* you, *Col.* 1. 27.—*Christ in you the hope of glory Obj.* It may be some will say, that have but small cause for it, Oh, if it be Faith that makes Christ mine, why then, I have a part in him; for I do believe (I thank God) in my Saviour Jesus Christ; I put my whole trust in him with all my heart. *Ans.* Those that have the true Faith, have been made to see that there is a false Faith, a counterfeit Faith; yea and to fear, and question, and examine whether their Faith were not a counterfeit Faith. Beloved, there is a counterfeit of every Grace; and certainly, there be many that think they believe, and don't. As I would have no child of God to think he doth not believe, when he doth; so I would have no Christless person to think he doth believe, when he doth not. The way to find out the truth of our Faith, is to put our

our Faith to the proof: have you not taken it for granted that you have Faith, without trying it? I'll give you but two Notes of the true Faith, and I am ſure they'll be enough to prove divers to be Unbelievers, that think themſelves to be Believers.

The true Faith is always accompanied with *love to Chriſt*, with a high prizing love to him; they that believe with their hearts, they ſet their hearts upon Chriſt; he hath their deareſt and choiceſt affections placed upon himſelf; they have diſcerned ſuch a Beauty in Chriſt, that they cannot but love him beſt, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. *Unto you that believe, he is precious.* Now there be many of you that think you have Faith, and yet let one liſten never ſo much to you, one cannot hear you talk of Chriſt, nor utter any longings or breathings of Soul after him; and when the beauty, and ſweetneſs, and fulneſs, and freeneſs of Grace that is in Chriſt is ſpoken of, you have no delight to be upon ſuch a Diſcourſe. And pray now, what do your thoughts and deſires run out moſt upon? Are not your minds and affections taken up with the preſent and periſhing things of this World, more than with Chriſt? Is there not ſomething that ſits nearer to

your hearts, than he doth? Surely here's a diſcovery of a falſe Faith, to ſay one believes in him, and yet not love him. Ask thy ſoul, Haſt not gone many a day, many a week, many a year, nay all the days of thy life, and had never one raiſed deſire towards him? Thou doſt not know what 'tis to be unſatisfied without his preſence, and without communion with him: thou doſt not know what 'tis to be ſick of love for him: he may ſtay never ſo long from thy Soul, and thou never grieve nor groan: thou canſt do well enough with the Creature, though thou haſt not Chriſt. I tell thee, if it be ſo, thou haſt thy Faith to ſeek: thou never madeſt any particular application of him yet to thy ſelf; for if thou hadſt, application of him would beget affection to him. A true Believer is greatly in love with the Lord Jeſus; he had rather be without any thing than him, he accounts all loſs in compariſon of him, *Phil.* 3. 8.

2. The true Faith is always accompanied with *likeneſs* to Chriſt. A Believer in him, is a Conformer to him, and a Follower of him; he bears about Chriſt's Image in the World, he lives according to Chriſt's Life, and according to Chriſt's Law, and according

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ding to Chriſt's Example; he partakes with him in his crucified and in his quickned State: As *Paul*, in *Gal.* 2. 20. when he ſpeaks that the life of faith was in him; in the beginning of the *verſe*, ſaith he, *I am crucified with Chriſt*; he died to ſin, and walked in newneſs of life. But now, how many be there of you, that think you have Faith, and yet are as much for ſin as ever you were, and as contrary to goodneſs as ever you were? you can be as vain, and as vile, and as carnal, and as covetous, and as proud, and paſſionate, and lukewarm, as ever you were. If it be thus with thee, I tell thee, if there were no better Believers than thou art, there would not be one true Believer in the World. A Faith that doth not change thee into a new Creature, is a falſe Faith; 2 *Pet.* 1. 1.—*To them that have obtained like precious faith with us.* How doth he make out, that they had this *precious faith?* why, *verſ.* 4. they had *eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt.* True Faith is of a ſanctifying, purifying nature; *It is at peace with no ſin, nor at war with any duty.*

*Reaſ.* 3. We ſhould every one look after this Freedom, becauſe *a diligent looking out for it, is the way to obtain it.* You know how

how much diligence hath done sometimes in other cases; how it hath, by the blessing of God upon his Labours, raised a man to great Riches, that before had nothing; yea, it may be, was worse than nothing. So if you would be diligent, how can you tell but that you may be rich, tho you are now so very poor? and that you may be made free, tho for the present you are in Bondage? Why may not a man get a spiritual Estate by taking pains, as well as many have gotten an earthly one?

*Obj.* Oh, but you'll say, there are some discouraging places that I meet with in the Scripture. *Ans.* Well, What are they? let us hear. And before thou goest any further, let me tell thee, it is a great mistake to think, that there is any place of Scripture rightly understood, that doth discourage any Soul from taking pains to look after his own Salvation. Doth not God every where almost, call upon People to do it? Is not the Word full of Precepts to that purpose, and full of Promises to that purpose? Take but one place among many, *Matth.* 7. 7, 8. *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth;*

*eth; and to him that knocketh, it ſhall be opened.* Well, I pray thee, let's hear thy diſcouraging Scriptures. *Obj.* Why, there are eſpecially two places that ſeem to put me quite out of heart. What be they? Why, *Rom.* 9. 16. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy. Anſ.* This is not to take a man off from Endeavours, or to diſcourage him in them; but only to ſhew, that a man muſt not put his Salvation upon his Endeavours, as the chief Cauſe of it. What would all his Endeavours be, if God had not Mercy on him? When we have done all, 'tis the Mercy and free Grace of God that any of us are ſaved. Well, what's the other Scripture? Oh, a ſad one! *Luk.* 13. 24. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate: for many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.* Why then, I were even as good not *ſeek* it; *Many ſhall ſeek to enter, and ſhall not be able. Anſ.* Why ſure, this is no diſcouragement againſt Endeavours now; but this is to ſhew us, how it will be hereafter, at the laſt day, with them that do not now endeavour, and now ſtrive: why, time will come, that they will *ſeek to enter in, and then they ſhall not be able.* This is plain from the Context; ſee

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*verſ.* 25. Well therefore, here's no diſcouragement, but a call to diligence. Now this ſame diligent looking out for this Freedom doth conſiſt, 1. In uſing the *means*: You muſt be inquiring: Would I come to ſuch or ſuch an end, why, what's the way to it? And then when you know what the Means are, you muſt uſe them. 2. In uſing *all* the Means, you muſt try every way to be ſaved. 3. In doing all in *obedience to God:* why this is my duty, here I am bid and bound to wait. 4. You muſt put forth *all your ſtrength* and care in the uſing of the Means: you muſt not do it by halves, neither in regard of the *means*, nor in regard of the *pains*. 5. You muſt do it with perſeverance and continuance; give not over. 6. You muſt look to God for a bleſſing upon the Means.

*Reaſ.* 4. We ſhould every one look after a ſhare in it, becauſe, *nothing will ſtand in ſtead, but the having an intereſt in this Freedom*: 'tis ſuch a *one thing needful*, that no man can have help or ſuccor any other where. Now he may think, that this and that will ſerve his turn, and that he ſhall not periſh, becauſe he truſts in a company of lying vanities; but he will at laſt find all his carnal refuges to fail him, and he will

will be left deſtitute of any thing to fly to, that will be ſufficient to ſave him from the wrath to come. Oh, Beloved, there is a dreadful day of God's fiery indignation drawing near; in which, all the wrath that ever was poured out upon the World, from the beginning of it to this hour, is but a drop, in compariſon to that Ocean of vengeance that then ſhall ſwallow up the children of diſobedience: and he that would then have his houſe to ſtand, had need have it *well built*, and laid upon a *ſure foundation*, for 'twill be tryed to the purpoſe, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13. Well now, I would a little aſſure you before-hand (that you may be wiſe in time) that nothing will ſtand you in ſtead but an intereſt in Chriſt and his Freedom.

1. Not all your *worldly Enjoyments*. If a man hath been never ſo great, and rich, and honourable in the World, if he hath had his Table ſpread every day with the fineſt Food, and his Body covered with the fineſt Cloath; if he hath laid up Treaſures of Gold, and Silver, and Jewels; if he had as many Pearls of his own as there be piles of graſs upon the ground, this would be nothing: the whole World, if you had it, cannot keep you from periſhing, if you

you have not a part in this Freedom, *Prov.* 10. 4.

2. Again; *No pleas or excuſes* that Chriſtleſs perſons make. Now they have many vain excuſes, why they do not look after Chriſt and their Souls, *Luk.* 14. 18, 19. One's excuſe is, that he *wants time*, he is ſo full of buſineſs: another he pleads, that he is not *book-learn'd*: another, why Lord help him, he is poor; rich Folks, and thoſe that need take no care for the things of this World, they may mind good things: and another, that he hath *ſuffered* ſo much in this World, that he hopes he ſhall not ſuffer hereafter: and another, he hopes that *he that made him will ſave him*, &c. and another, tho he ſwears an Oath now and then, or tells a Lye, yet he is *ſorry* for it, God forgive him. Oh, but theſe fig-leaves which thou haſt ſewed together, will not cover thy nakedneſs when the Lord appears, *Iſa.* 28. 17.

3. Again; *No Gifts* which God hath endowed you with. Tho you have the gift of *Knowledge*, and the gift of *Prayer*, or a Miniſter the gift of *Preaching*, as *Mat.* 7. 22. God may make a great deal of uſe of you, while you are here; and yet, if you have not an intereſt in Chriſt, he will damn you at laſt.

4. Again;

4. Again; No *particular Opinion* that you have taken up. It may be one may think, that becauſe he is for the *Epiſcopal* way, which he judges to be right, therefore now he ſhall be ſaved: Another, becauſe he is for the *Presbyterians*, or *Independents*, or *Anabaptiſts* way, which he judges to be right, therefore he ſhall be ſaved. No, be of what Opinion thou wilt, or of what Way thou wilt, if thou haſt not an Intereſt in this Freedom by Chriſt, thou art a condemn'd man, thy Opinion won't ſave thee. The Phariſees they thought that they could not but be ſaved, becauſe they were of that Sect: but when God came to work upon *Paul*, he made him ſee, that 'twas not his being a Phariſee would do his buſineſs, tho he was one of the ſtricteſt ſort among them; but he muſt have the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, or he was undone.

5. Again; No near *relation* to thoſe who have been, or are the *people of God*. It may be, thou haſt been the Child, or the Brother, or Siſter of them that feared God, of the ſame Blood with them after the Fleſh: but for all this, thou muſt go to hell, if thou haſt not a part in this Freedom. *Mary*, that was the Mother of Chriſt, you know, was very nearly related to him, he lay in her

her Womb; but that would not have been enough that he was born of her Body, if he had not been born in her heart. It would not serve the turn of the *Jews* that they were *Abraham*'s Seed, and the Children of his Flesh; but they must be partakers of his Faith in Christ too, or else they could not be blessed. *David* did not count it enough, that he could tell God that he was *the Son of his Hand maid*, unless he could tell him that he was his *Servant* too: and he puts this first, to shew, that the other would have done him no good, unless he had been interested in Christ himself, *Psal.* 116. 16.

6. No *religious or godly Education* that you have had. It may be, you have been brought up in the Families where there hath been much of God and Goodness set up; yea, perhaps you have spent all your days in the company and communion of the Saints: and yet at last you must have your eternal abode and portion with Sinners, if you have not a part in this Freedom. *Ishmael* was brought up in a good Family, in the Family of *Abraham*, of whom God said, *I know him, that he will command his children and his houshold after him*, Gen. 18. 19. And yet, for want of this

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Freedom, he was rejected, and ſo was *Eſau*.

7. No *moral Virtues* that you have lived in. It may be, thou haſt been a civil Perſon, an honeſt Perſon, a chaſt Perſon, a ſober Perſon; perhaps never wronged any Body by unjuſt Dealing, never told a Lie, never ſwore an Oath, never diſguiſedſt thy ſelf by Drunkenneſs, never defiledſt thy Body with Uncleanneſs: it won't do thee a jot of good for the ſaving of thee from Hell, if thou haſt no part in this Freedom, *Matth.* 5. 20. Thou muſt have a righteouſneſs that exceeds this, even the righteouſneſs of Chriſt by Faith, or elſe Heavens door will be ſhut againſt thee.

8. No *profeſſion* that you have made of the Goſpel of Chriſt, tho to a very high degree. Tho thou haſt outwardly ſeemed to be a very zealous and forward Diſciple of his, haſt worn his Livery, and haſt been baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; tho thou haſt often in the Sacrament, eaten of that Bread that ſignifies his Body, and drank of that Wine that ſignifies his Blood: yet if thou haſt not this Freedom, 'tis nothing; 1 *Joh.* 5. 12. *He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life*, let him profeſs what he will of him.

9. No *good thoughts* that the People of God have had of you. It may be thou haſt been taken for a true Child of God; no body ſuſpects thee of Hypocriſie; thou art current Gold by their Weights: yea, but if thou haſt not a part in this Freedom, when thou comeſt to be weighed in Gods Ballance, thou wilt be found wanting.

10. No *ſufferings* that you have met with for Conſcience-ſake. Tho thou haſt thus ſuffered, yet thou muſt ſuffer again, and that for ever, if thy Conſcience be not purged from dead works by the Blood of Chriſt; as *Paul* ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 13. 1. that *tho he gave his body to be burned, if he had not charity, it profited him nothing.* No more would it thee, if thou haſt not Chriſt.

11. Again; No *bitter cries* or earneſt intreaties that you ſhall at laſt make to God, for the eſcaping of his wrath. Oh! when Chriſt is juſt ready to pronounce the Sentence againſt thee, what a lamentable ado wilt thou make that it might not be paſt? but if thou haſt not a part in this Freedom, all thy wringing of hands, and falling upon thy knees, will be in vain.

12. Once again; Not *all the mercy* that

is

is in God. Tho God hath an infinite Ocean of mercy, yet it won't be for thee, if thou doſt not look after this Freedom, *Luk.* 19. 27. As there is no miſery to the Saints, ſo there is no mercy to the wicked beyond this life.

*Uſe* 1. This then ſharply reproves the great ſlothfulneſs of the World, in the matters of their Souls. 'Tis every ones duty to look after a ſhare in this Freedom, and yet almoſt every body is idle: the whole earth is quiet and at reſt; Oh, how little ſtirring is there for an Intereſt in Chriſt! What *Pharaoh* ſaid of the *Iſraelites* in their Bondage, I am ſure may be ſaid of Sinners in this Bondage; *Exod.* 4. 17. *Ye are idle, ye are idle.* Oh! what cauſe is there now that I ſhould preach with tears, to bewail the lamentable careleſsneſs of people about their everlaſting Concernments! The good Lord of his infinite mercy be in the midſt of us at this time, by the power of his Spirit, to convince you that are out of Chriſt, of this great ſin, and to humble you for it. I offer my ſelf now, in Gods Name, to plead with you about your woful negligence in not looking after this Freedom, which you have heard is every ones duty to look after, and therefore 'tis yours.

There is Freedom to be had by Christ; but pray now, you that are in your sins, what have you done to get it? Oh! what would many of you do to get the World? How would you ride and run, and rise early, and go late to bed for a gainful Bargain, or great Estate? You are so forward and eager, some of you, for the things of this World, that you are like a high-mettall'd Horse, you can hardly be held in; Christ is fain, as it were, to call from Heaven to bid you stop, *Isa.* 55. 2. *Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?* You'll try all ways, and turn every stone to see what may be done for a part in these *uncertain Riches*, though it may be you shall never get them, when you have done your utmost; and if you do, you may leave them as soon as you have them. Why, but Sirs, is there not another life? and are there not better things? and have you not precious Souls to look after? and is it not high time for some of you, by course of nature, to think of removing to Eternity, and of being in a fitness for Death and Judgment? And yet, ah, Lord! you live, as to spiritual things, as if you had nothing to do. Upon these accounts, the Scripture

Scripture sets you forth as persons that are *standing still*; *Why stand you here all the day idle?* Matth. 20. 6. and as persons that have their *hands in their bosoms*, Prov. 19. 24. and as persons that are *asleep upon their beds*; Prov. 6. 9. The children of God, if there be any of them that live about you, or among you; they are, as 'twere, all of a trembling, for fear they should fall short of Heaven, and fail of the Grace of GOD, tho they are not like you, to let all run at random; *Phil.* 2. 12. But you, tho your Sins be unpardoned, and your Souls unconverted, and nothing is set at rights between God and you; yet you set neither your Hand nor your Heart to any good thing. Why now, is this the way to do well? Dare you think that you are going to happiness under all this remissness? Do you believe, that *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it?* What, have you no *talent* to *trade with* for the glory of God, and the good of your own Souls? If you have not *five*, nay if you have not *two*, have you not *one?* Sure thou hast one Talent at least: God gives every one something to be doing withall; why, but what dost thou with it? What dost thou do with thy

Time, with thy Strength, with thy Understanding, Reason and Judgment? What dost thou do with thy Body? and what dost thou do with thy Soul? What, hast thou received all these, to put them to no good use? Is there so great a work to do as thou art told of in every Sermon thou hearest, and thou fallest to nothing of it? Well then, here's thy sin, but where's thy shame? Art not ashamed of this slothfulness now? No wonder indeed that thou art yet in such a woful condition, and thou letteſt all alone: Well may the fire burn the house to the ground, when he that dwells in it doth nothing to quench it. Oh, Sin and the Devil will play *Rex* in thy Soul, that meet with no resistance. Three things I would briefly leave with you, to go a little further upon this Use.

1. 'Tis true, *you cannot do all that you should.* You should be new Creatures; and you should repent and believe: but this is God's Workmanship, and God's Gift and Grace, *Eph.* 2. 7, 8, 9. No man goes thus far by any power of his own, *Joh.* 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* The truth is, you think you can do these things, but you are deceived: you promise some-

ſometimes to do theſe things in your *own ſtrength*; if you did not think ſo, you would look to God in your promiſes, and go to God for power to perform it; but you mind not that. And what makes you put off this work to hereafter? you are not for repenting *preſently*, nor for coming to Chriſt *preſently*, but you ſay, you *will* do it tho: Why, this ſhews, that thou thinkeſt thou *canſt* do it. When a man puts off a buſineſs, I'll do it at ſuch a time, ſaith he; he thinks he can do it when he will, elſe he would not put it off, but go in hand with it now. But you are deceived, you cannot do it of your ſelves; for the work of Grace is *above* the power of Nature: 'tis too high for Nature to reach it; nay, corrupt Nature is *contrary* to Grace: Yet,

2. You *can* do, what you *do not*: you *can* forbear many ſins that you commit, as to ſuch a paricular Action and Time. I have known ſome that would ſwear hard among their Companions, yet in the preſence of one that they knew would reprove them, they could bite in their Oaths; and you *can* outwardly perform many Duties that you neglect: and therefore, you muſt look that God will judge you for neglecting

them. You *can* put your ſelves under the Means, and you *can* come to hear the Word, and lend attention to it; and if you will, you *can* remember ſomething that is preached, and think and ſpeak of it when you go home: You *can* ſet up reading the Scripture, and praying morning and evening in your Families; you *can* get acquainted with thoſe that fear God, and need not be ſuch ſtrangers to them, unleſs you would your ſelves. You *can* ſend for a good Miniſter, if you will, to your Houſe, and appoint him a convenient hour to come, wherein your ſelves and family may be free to attend to thoſe Inſtructions, which you, if you will, *can* deſire him to give you. You *can* reprove one another for ſwearing, or lying, or taking the Name of God in vain. You *can* ask your ſelves ſome ſerious queſtions in private, about your Souls condition; Do I hate ſin? Do I love God? Have I a part in Chriſt? Am I fitted for Death and Judgment? And you *can* beg of God (in words) to make you better; and many more things you *can* do. And therefore,

3. *You ſhould do what you can.* There is a deal muſt go to your Salvation, that no leſs than an Almighty Arm can bring to paſs;

paſs; and very like, if thou wer't ſtirring, God would put forth his power, and come in with ſupernatural Grace and Aſſiſtance: I would have you to hope he would. But why do not you do what you *can?* Here's your ſin; and how can you expect that he ſhould help you to do what you *cannot*, if you do not what you *can?* You do in ſome meaſure put your ſelves into the way of Gods enabling you, when you do ſet that natural power a work which you have, as reaſonable Creatures: as the man, that though he could not put himſelf into the Waters, where there was Cure for thoſe that were diſeaſed; yet he lay at the Pool. Yea, tho thou ſhouldſt not get Salvation at laſt (which thou haſt no juſt ground to be hopeleſs of) yet, thou ſhouldſt do what thou canſt, if it were but to leſſen thy Condemnation, and that thou mighteſt not ſink ſo deep into the Torments of Hell, as otherwiſe thou wilt: for he that hath received a Talent, and wraps it up in a Napkin, and puts it to no good uſe, will thereby greaten his everlaſting miſery; *Matth.* 25. 30. *Caſt ye the unprofitable ſervant into outer darkneſs: there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.* Who is this unprofitable ſervant? Why,

*verſ.*

*verſ.* 25. the wicked and *ſlothful* one, that did not do what he could; he is caſt into outer darkneſs, the worſt place of all.

*Uſe* 2. Then if every one ſhould *look after a ſhare in this Freedom*, to get it for himſelf, this ſhews us, the *fulneſs* that is in Chriſt. If *every one* would come to him, he hath enough for them: he keeps ſuch a good houſe, that he can ſatisfie all that are hungry; in this houſe there is *room enough* to hold you, though you come *never ſo many*, Luk. 14. 22. and *bread enough* to feed you, tho you come *never ſo empty*, Luk. 15. 17. The reaſon why any Soul periſheth, is not becauſe Chriſt is attended with any wants, but becauſe they that were bidden would not come. As for himſelf, he hath enough to ſave as many Worlds, as are Souls that ſhall be ſaved. And therefore, you that are come to Chriſt, make no ſpare of him; feed upon him, and fear no lack; he hath a Fountain that can never be drawn dry, an Eſtate that can never be ſpent. *All the fear is, whether you'll feed enough upon Chriſt; not whether Chriſt hath enough to feed you.* But I ſhall not inlarge upon this. And ſo I have done with the third Branch of the Doctrine.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

*Wherein the Fourth Branch of the Doctrine is handled; namely, That* this Freedom comes by Christ.

THE Fourth Branch of the Doctrine is, *That this Freedom comes by Christ; If the Son shall make you free.* Whoever is made free, is made free by Christ; 'tis he doth it, wherever it is done. In the carrying on of this, I shall do these five things: 1. I shall shew, when this Freedom that is in Christ did begin to be of force. 2. What this intimates to us, that *our Freedom comes by Christ.* 3. How it doth appear that this Freedom comes by Christ. 4. After what manner this Freedom is in Christ. 5. I shall make Application.

To the 1. *When this Freedom that is in Christ did begin to be of force*; I answer, Immediately upon the *fall* of mankind. It is a great mistake to think, that this Freedom did not begin to be of force *till Christ came in the flesh.* If that were so, then all that

that died before that time, would have died in their ſins. 'Tis true, when Chriſt came, there were ſome things about this Freedom that were not before: As,

1. It *was more clearly manifeſted.* They before us had it in *ſhadows*, and *types*, and *figures*: the deliverance of the children of *Iſrael* out of the bondage of *Egypt*, and then a long time after out of the bondage of *Babylon*, did point at this; and all the *ceremonial Worſhip* and Sacrifices did look this way, ſignifying, that there was one to come that ſhould redeem them to God by his Blood: and all the good and benefit of thoſe things that were then obſerved in thoſe Miniſtrations, lay only in this, that they did lead them to Chriſt who was held forth in them, tho in a more dark and obſcure manner. Yea, but when Chriſt came, this Freedom was *brought unto light*; for then he appeared, who was the Subſtance of all; and then when the *ſubſtance* came, the *ſhadows* ceaſed.

2. It was *more largely extended.* Before, this Freedom was kept within the bounds of the *Jewiſh* Nation, *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. 'Twas a great priviledge then, to be one of that People, becauſe *ſalvation was of the Jews*, and all the reſt of the World were Strangers

Strangers and Foreigners: But when Christ came, then the other Nations, poor Heathen and Gentiles, had this Salvation sent to them. The Lord now *makes his way to be known upon earth, and his saving health among all nations.* But for all this you must know, that this Freedom was in force ever since the *fall*; for then God made the Promise of sending Jesus Christ, *viz.* That *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpents head*, Gen. 3. 15. and all that were saved, were saved in the way of looking to that *promised Seed*, though he was not to come into the World till *the fulness of time.*

I must needs desire you to take notice of four things from hence, That this Freedom hath been of force since the Fall. As,

1. That *persons, not living in the days wherein Christ was upon Earth, is no hindrance at all to their eternal Salvation*; for many are saved, both before his coming in the Flesh, and since his ascending into Heaven, who never saw him in his bodily presence. I confess it would have been a very desirable thing, to have seen our dear and blessed Saviour here in our Nature; and to have had the priviledge to have conversed with

with him about the things of the kingdom of God; and to have heard him that *spake as never man spake.* But we are hindred neither from Grace nor Glory for the want of this; we may be *sanctified* without it, and we may be *saved* without it. As for *sanctification*, many that did so see him, did remain unsanctified; and People were not converted by the Humane Nature of Christ, but by the Divine Power and Spirit that dwelt in him, *Joh.* 6. 63. And as to *salvation*, that's obtained, not by beholding Christ with an eye of *Flesh*, but with an eye of *Faith*; and they who have that eye, here's their comfort, Though they never saw Christ upon Earth, they shall see him in Heaven. If thou hadst seen him upon Earth, thou wouldst have seen him in the *form of a servant*, in a poor and mean condition (for then he came to humble himself, and to be of no reputation) but 'twill be another manner of sight to see him in Heaven, to behold his glory there, *Joh.* 17. 24.

2. *That there were Believers, and as great Believers, in the days of the Old Testament, as there are in the New.* Believing was the way to Salvation then, as well as now. Because this *Freedom* by Christ did not then begin,

begin, when Christ came in the Flesh; therefore you must think, that Faith in Christ did not then begin neither. Believing was the old and the only way to Heaven, ever since the Covenant of Works was broken all in pieces by *Adam*'s Transgression. Indeed there have been more Believers since the times of the New Testament, than formerly; because the Gospel hath been propagated further: but there were as true and as great Believers before, as you may see, *Heb.* 11. where the Faith of *Abel*, and *Enoch*, and *Noah*, and *Abraham*, and the rest, is recorded and propounded as an Example to us. And if there were such eminent Believers then, how shall we answer it if we be Unbelievers now, who have greater helps for our Faith than they had? It should much stir us up to believe, to consider what times we live in; how many things we have to help our Faith, of that they had: they had the Promises of Christ *made*, but we have them *fulfilled*; they were fain to spell out Christ in a heap of Ceremonies, but we may read him in his own Story.

3. Take notice of the *wonderful Virtue* that is in Christ; such a Virtue as reaches from the beginning of the World to the

end

end of it. You see his Freedom was of force in the first Generation, and so it shall be to the last. You know, that Christ said, when the woman that had the bloody Issue touched him, *I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.* But Oh, what a deal of virtue is there gone out from Christ in this respect, that he hath been the Redeemer of Souls from the entrance of Time, and will be so till Time shall be no more. Things may be very precious when they are made, and for a while after, as cordial Waters, and curious Ointments, and costly Perfumes; but they won't always keep their Virtue, and especially if they stand open, it will not be long before they be corrupted: but Jesus Christ is such an excellent Cordial, and such an excellent Ointment, that tho he hath been so long standing open for the use of every comer to him, yet he hath not lost any thing of his Virtue or Savour; he is as refreshing and as sweet still, as evet he was. You find in *Solomon's* time, in the Old Testament, how he speaks in *Cant.* 1. 3. *Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee.* What a *savour* Christ sent forth to the People of God then! and in 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. in the times of

of the New Teſtament, ſtill Chriſt held his Virtue; he was precious to them that believed, and ſo he is ſtill. A Believer can be refreſhed and comforted with Chriſt, (he is ſo full of Virtue ſtill) when he can be refreſhed and comforted with nothing elſe: 'tis the preſent experience of the Saints in this Age, as well as in the Ages that are paſt, That Chriſt can revive a drooping Soul, and chear up a fainting Spirit now, as well as ever he could.

4. Take notice of the *exceeding riches of the grace of God*, that upon ſuch a thing as the Fall, he ſhould bring in Freedom by Chriſt. Oh! what an aſtoniſhing Conſideration is this, that God ſhould take occaſion to manifeſt his higheſt Mercy, where he might have taken occaſion to have manifeſted his hotteſt Juſtice! What could have been expected, in all likelihood, when our firſt Parents, and we in them, had thus by ſin ſpoiled all God's Workmanſhip, and defaced his bleſſed Image to which we were conformed in our Creation, but that he ſhould have left us to all the miſery that his broken Law could expoſe us to? And lo! no ſooner had man undone himſelf, but he brings in a promiſe of Redemption by Chriſt. Who would ever have thought,

that Mercy would have come in at that door? Behold, Sirs, at what ſtrange doors God can bring Mercy in: when the Condition looks like a hopeleſs, loſt, undone condition, God can let in Mercy there. If it be *great affliction*, nay if it be *great tranſgreſſion*, God can let Mercy in for all that, *Hoſ.* 13. 9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, but in* me *is thine help.* There Mercy comes in, but at what a ſtrange door 'tis! And therefore, whatever be thy caſe, or whatever be thy guilt, don't ſay, Well, to be ſure Mercy can never come in here. 'Tis true, we muſt look for Mercies coming in the appointed ways of finding it, and we muſt not expect it at any ſtrange door. Don't tempt the Lord, and preſume upon hopes of Grace in ways of ſin, *Rom.* 6. 1. *What ſhall we ſay then? Shall we continue in ſin that grace may abound?* I only note this from it, That when God will, 'tis wonderfull to ſee what ſtrange occaſions he takes to ſhew himſelf gracious.

To the Second thing, what is intimated to us by this, *That Freedom comes by Chriſt.*

1. It intimates the *horrible nature of ſin*, in that no leſs than *God's own Son* muſt be the Redeemer from it. You know ſometimes

times the greatneſs of a Diſeaſe is ſeen in the greatneſs of the Phyſician that comes to the Patient. If one ailes but ſome ſmall or ordinary matter, why, then one will hope to do well again, either without any Phyſician at all, or elſe that an ordinary Phyſician will ſerve the turn: But when there comes ſome famous eminent Doctor, one that all the Countrey hath been laid for, to inquire out a man that is ſo skilful and able in his Profeſſion, that there is not ſuch another to be heard of; why, then People will be ready to ſay, Certainly the perſon that this Phyſician goes to, is taken with a very dangerous Diſeaſe, and his condition is no ordinary Diſtemper, becauſe there is ſuch an extraordinary Phyſician ſent for. So here, that the *Son of God* muſt be ſent into the World to recover it; that there muſt be a *Phyſician from Heaven* to do this Work: Oh! it ſpeaks what a grievous condition ſin brings us into. Sin is the worſt of evils: one had better be any thing for Affliction, than be a Sinner; yea, the greateſt ſuffering is not comparable to the leaſt ſin. And therefore, you that will not believe that ſin hath any ſuch great harm in it, you muſt needs think you are deceived, if you do but conſider what

a Physician this makes work for: See *Psal.* 41. 4. If thou hadst committed but one little sin in all thy life, yet 'tis of such dangerous consequence, that thou wilt certainly die of it, if this Doctor *Jesus* do not come to cure thee.

2. That *spiritual Freedom is an unspeakable Mercy:* you may see 'tis, in that it comes by Christ, by so great a hand. Do you think, that the Son of God should come down from Heaven to bestow it upon us, if it were not some transcendent good thing? There are many excellent Mercies that are given to men, and yet there's no coming from Heaven to give them; the Gifts come from Heaven, but the Giver doth not, *Jam.* 1. 15. but this is such a Gift, and such a Mercy, that the Giver must come from Heaven to give it, *Joh.* 16. 28. Oh, Sirs! what high thoughts should we have then of this Freedom? Surely there's abundance of worth in it; (as I shall shew upon the last Branch of the Doctrine) in that it comes to us by such a Messenger as Christ himself. You that have a part in this, you may say as *Paul* doth, 2 *Cor.* 9. 15. *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*

3. That

3. That Christ hath a *ruining design upon the Kingdom of the Devil.* If *Freedom* comes by him, then *that* must not stand. This *Freedom* by Christ, is God's device and contrivance, to batter down the Devil's walls, to turn his Subtilty into Foolishness, and his Power into Weakness, and to bring away his Subjects from him in spight of his heart, even as many as the Lord will have to be saved. 'Tis true, the devil will keep multitudes of Souls in his slavery, but there is not one of them that God hath chosen, but shall be sure to be brought out from his Iron Fornace. The Devil may keep those that are to be his own for ever, but he shall not always keep any that belong to God; though he hath some of them yet in his Dominion, yet they shall be delivered: as *Pharaoh* had the Children of *Israel* for a while in captivity, but at last he must part with them whether he would or no, and there remained not one of them left behind. Though they don't come all out in the *self-same day*, as they did out of *Egypt*, Exod. 12. 41. yet now one is converted, and then another is converted, till it shall come to that at length, that the Devil hath not one left that was a chosen Vessel to God.

4. It intimates, that as Christ undertook the Work of our Redemption, so he did not *fail of accomplishing* that which he went about. Freedom comes by him; he did not only attempt or indeavour to bring it, but he *effected* it. Men many times they set upon great things, but then when they have begun them, they cannot carry them through; the burden, and charge, and care of it is beyond their power; and it is one of the greatest follies of some, that they will be medling with those things that are too high for them. Now this was a very high Undertaking that Christ went about, to procure *Freedom* for such a vast number of Souls as were to be brought to Glory: for tho 'tis true, they that shall be saved are but few, in comparison to those that shall perish; yet considered apart and by themselves, they are a wonderful great Company, *Rev.* 7. 9. Well, but now as high an Undertaking as this was, 'twas not too high for Christ; he began it, and he finished it; See *Joh.* 17. 4. *I have finished the work*; he means, this Work of our Redemption. And in *Joh.* 19. 30. you read, that these words, *It is finished*, were the last words that Christ spake before he died: as if he

should

ſhould have ſaid, Though I am a dying, yet the work of my Life is done. I do not go off the World like a Bungler, that went about what he was not able to effect. All that believe in me will find, that I have not been a *half*, but a *whole Saviour* to them: the buſineſs hath not miſcarried in my hands, that they ſhould wiſh I had never medled with it. You know, the Apoſtle tells the *Coloſſians*, chap. 2. 10. that they were *compleat* in him: and in *Heb.* 9. 12. 'tis ſaid, that Chriſt hath *obtained* eternal Redemption for us: he did not only *endeavour* to obtain it, but he hath *obtained* it. The Greek word is, he hath *found* it; he did not do as a man doth ſometimes when a thing is loſt, he ſeeks it, but then he comes back again and ſaith, he cannot find it. *Iſa.* 53. 10. *The pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand*: that is, he ſhall be ſure to carry it through. 'Tis true, he met with many difficulties in his way; as it was the higheſt Work that ever was gone about, ſo 'twas the hardeſt Work: if it had not been Chriſt that had been about it, it would never have been brought to paſs; but becauſe 'twas he that had it in his hand, therefore he brought it to a bleſſed period. And in this, Chriſt

is an Example to us, not only to begin good things, but to hold out to the finishing of them, whatever hardship we must undergo. Beloved, difficulty doth attend all Duty, and great difficulties do attend some Duties; but for all that, we must see the *end* of them. God loves such a frame of spirit, as to have Christians to be *crowding and pressing* to Heaven, through many things that stand in their way. 'Tis no great matter, you know, to get to a place when one hath Elbow room enough; but when the way is thronged up, and there is this to hinder him, and that to hinder him, and yet the man will not give over till he comes where he should; it speaks that he was resolved to get thither. And remember this Note, That the going on in our Duty, notwithstanding difficulty, is an evident sign of our Sincerity. There was a great deal of difficulty in *Abraham*'s way, when he was to offer up his only Son at the Command of God: but because he would not stick at that, see what is said to him, *Gen.* 22. 12. *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not with-held thy Son, thine only Son from me.* As if he should have said, Now thou hast given a proof it to purpose.

You

You may judge of the Sincerity or Hypocriſie of your Hearts in this caſe. You begin many things that are good, it may be; ay but do you carry them on to perfection? Don't you fly back again, when you find 'tis hard? It may be thou beginneſt to deny thy ſelf in this and that Sin or Luſt; yea, but as thou art a doing of it, thou findeſt that Self-denial is a very hard thing, and ſo thou *returneſt with the dog to his vomit, and with the ſow that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the mire.* Oh! this is a bad ſign that thy heart is not right in the ſight of God. One that is ſincere will deſire to ſtir himſelf up the more now, becauſe he finds 'tis hard; and he will be thinking, What, ſhall I be worſted, and let alone, becauſe my way is not ſmooth and eaſie for the Fleſh to walk in? And tho he finds it difficult, yet he doth not think it impoſſible; he believes, through Grace, ſuch a ſtrong Corruption may be ſubdued, and ſuch a Temptation may be overcome, and ſuch a great Affliction may be born with a patient ſpirit; and therefore, he will go to God for power, tho he hath none of his own; and go to God to make things eaſie, tho they are ſo hard to him, and then he finds he can go on, *Col.* 4. 13.

To

To the Third, *How doth it appear that this Freedom comes by Christ? Anſ.* For this I ſhall give you two ſorts of Arguments; 1. Some that prove it more directly. 2. Others that prove it more remotely; being drawn from ſuch conſiderations as are not immediately about Chriſt himſelf.

Thoſe Arguments that prove it more directly, which do more nearly relate to Chriſt himſelf, are theſe.

1. This Freedom was to come by one that was the *only begotten Son of God*, who could call God Father, and whom God could call his Son, after ſuch a manner as none elſe could: they muſt have ſuch a Relation one to another, as could not, upon ſome accounts, be communicated to any other. For tho 'tis true, God doth in his rich mercy enter into the Relation of a Father with Believers, and gives them power to become the Sons of God, *Joh.* 1. 12. Yet (as I have formerly hinted) to *them* God is a Father by *Grace*, *Covenant and Promiſe*, and they are children to him by *Faith*; ſee 2 *Cor.* 6. *ult. Gal.* 3. 26. But this was not enough for him that was to bring in this Freedom; he muſt not be one that was *made* the Son of God, ſo as to be none before; but he was to have this

this Relation to him from all eternity. We cannot expreſs the manner of it, it is ſuch a glorious Myſtery. Well now, who can this be but Chriſt? The Saints, they do not claim their Sonſhip this way, tho they are called Sons, and wonder at it that they ſhould, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1. Yet they acknowledge, that they were not the Sons of God by nature, no, but children of wrath, *Eph.* 2. 3. They'll quickly tell you, 'twas not their *natural due* to be the Children of God, but to be fire-brands in Hell; for ſo this Scripture laſt quoted doth intimate. And the glorious Angels in Heaven, they don't claim their Sonſhip this way neither: they acknowledge that they are Sons by *Creation*, and they all of them praiſe and bleſs the Lord for this, and *ſhout* as it were *for joy*, in ſinging together to his Name, *Job* 38. 7. But Chriſt he hath this Sonſhip by *eternal Generation*; this is the *only begotten of the Father*, as he is often called, and therefore Freedom muſt come by him. And in my Text you may obſerve, that when Chriſt ſpeaks of this Freedom, he puts in this Relation of his to God; he uſeth the word *Son*, *If the Son*, &c. To teach them, that it muſt needs come by him, ſince he was the eternal Son of God: for ſuch a one

he

he muſt be, who was to give this Freedom.

There is one Objection, before I can go on, that I would take notice of. *Obj.* But it is ſaid in Scripture, that this Freedom, and the Works about it, were to be by a *Servant* of God; which is another Relation than that we are now ſpeaking of, yea and a far more inferior one than this of the Son of God. If a *Servant* of God was to bring this Freedom, how can it be by the Son of God? You ſhall find the places in *Iſa.* 53. 11. *Zech.* 3. 8. and elſewhere. *Anſ.* This is none other than the Son of God who is here ſpoken of; only he is called by this name, in reference to the *great Work* that he was to do, and in reference to the mean and *low condition* in which he was to do it; *he took upon himſelf the form of a ſervant:* and in reſpect to his *faithfulneſs* in all that he undertook, as the Scripture ſaith, *he was* faithful *to him that appointed him.*

2. This Freedom was to come by one that was to be *God and Man together in one perſon.* He was to be ſuch a wonderful One, that the like was not to be found again, either in Heaven or Earth. In Heaven there was one that was God, yea but he was not *man*; and upon Earth

Earth there were many that were men, yea but they were not God. But here the two Natures, the *Divine* and the *Humane*, they muſt meet together in him that was to be the Redeemer: and there was great reaſon for it; the procuring of this Freedom did require both theſe to concur, and each of them to lend their helping hand. Now thus it was with Chriſt; he was *God*, for he ſaith, *I and my Father are one*; and he was *man* too, for he ſaith, *The Father is greater than I.* And therefore, Chriſt was the wonderfulleſt Sight that ever was beheld upon Earth: to ſee a perſon that was true God and true Man *at once*, what a rare Sight was that? Oh! What an aſtoniſhing thing is the Incarnation of Chriſt, that God ſhould take upon him humane Fleſh, and that humane Fleſh ſhould be united to the Godhead! Yea, this will make a conſiderable part of the Glory that ſhall be in Heaven, to behold the Son of God in our Nature. What an everlaſting joy will it be to the Saints, to ſee Chriſt in their Nature ſitting down at the right hand of God! Well, therefore, ſurely Freedom comes by Chriſt, ſince 'tis he that is both God and man in one Perſon for ever.

3. This

3. This Freedom was to come by one, that was to be *all his days upon Earth without ſin*; he muſt lead as pure a ſpotleſs Life, as the perfect Law did call for: he muſt not do as we do; the beſt of us perform Duties that have a great many flaws, and fail in this and that, and then repent; no, he muſt fulfill all righteouſneſs to a tittle. Why, ſo did Chriſt, and therefore Freedom comes by him, 1 *Pet.* 2. 22. *Who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* There was not a Tranſgreſſion in the whole Life of Chriſt; he was without blemiſh and without ſpot; tho he *ſpake* much, yet he never ſpake amiſs; tho he *thought* on many things, yet he never thought amiſs; tho he *did* many things, yet he never did any thing amiſs; he had not only ſincerity, but he had *perfection*; not only holineſs, but *all the degrees* of it. The People of God, tho they have Grace, yet they have need of grains of Allowance; they don't *ſo* their Duty, but that they ſtand in need of mercy; tho God be glorified by that they do, yet they don't look to be juſtified by what they do. But now, Chriſt he lived ſo, as that he was *juſtified by works*; yea ſo, as to juſtifie all that believe in him by his works, *Rom.* 5. 19. He lived ſo exactly,

actly, as that we need not fear to follow his Example: we are commanded to follow the Example of the Saints; yea, but we must take heed that we don't follow them in every thing, for fear we should follow them in sin: tho the general course of a child of Gods walking is holy and good, yet he hath his particular miscarriages, and there we must leave him: but Christ's walking 'twas *all* obedience, and *all* conformity to the Will of God; therefore he is a fit and a full Pattern for us, in what is our Duty.

4. This Freedom was to come by one, who could *make full satisfaction* to the Justice of God for sin: for so God was resolved, that he that would be the Purchaser of it, should, without any abatement, bring in such a Ransom as was able to recompence all the wrong that he had received. And therefore, he had need to be some *mighty Undertaker* that should appear in this Work; since he was to offer up a Sacrifice of such Value, as might make an All-sufficient Expiation and Atonement to the highest Demands that could be propounded in a way of Satisfaction. Now if all the Beasts of the Forest, and all the Cattle upon a thousand Hills should have been

been gathered together, and given in Sacrifice to God; yea, if all the lives of Men and Angels ſhould have gone for it: this would not have quieted the Juſtice of God. The guilt of ſin is another manner of thing, than that it can be bought off, or purged away by ſuch means as theſe: no, there muſt one be found, who could bring a more excellent Sacrifice than all Creatures, or any mere Man could amount to. Now, this full Satisfaction Jeſus Chriſt did make, and therefore *Freedom comes by him.* And that he did ſo, appears in three things, which you find in that Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*: 1. In that after Chriſt had offered up himſelf, all other *Sacrifices ceaſed:* it aboliſhed all the *ceremonial* Worſhip of the Old Teſtament; then there was no more *blood of bulls and of goats* required to be ſhed, nor the *aſhes of an heifer to ſprinkle the unclean*: See *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Thoſe Miniſtrations and Services were pleaſing to God before, as they did type out his Son that was to come: but when he was come, and had offered up that great Offering of Himſelf, then (mark the expreſſion) God hath *no pleaſure* in them; thou *wouldſt not* have them, ſaith *ver.* 5. He had *no pleaſure* in them, ſaith *ver.* 6. He *takes them away*, ſaith

ſaith *ver.* 9. *q. d.* Away with them, what ſhould I do with theſe now? He looks upon his *Son in the fleſh*, the *Body* that he had *prepared*, the *ſecond ſacrifice*, as 'tis here called; that is, of another kind and nature than the firſt Sacrifices under the Law were; and that is it that he is for, and that he will now eſtabliſh. Now if Chriſt had not made full Satisfaction, then theſe former Sacrifices ſhould not have ceaſed; there muſt have been the Old Teſtament Worſhip ſtill: But there is no need of that now; nay, it would be an abomination to God, *now*, to bring him ſuch kind of things as theſe; it would be, as you read in another caſe, *Iſa.* 66. 3. *He that killeth an ox, would be as if he ſlew a man: he that ſacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dogs neck: he that burneth incenſe, as if he bleſſed an idol.*

2. It appears that Chriſt hath made full Satisfaction by this, that he doth *not continue his own offering* up of himſelf: he was to purchaſe this Freedom by the offering up of himſelf. Now, if he had not laid down a full Price, why then, he muſt have gone to his Sufferings again, he muſt have died *often*; as the Sacrifices under the Law, becauſe they were not full, and could

not make the comers to them perfect, therefore they must be renewed; but Christ offered up himself but *once*, and there was enough: See *Heb.* 9. 25, 26. God never said to Christ, Son, you must die again; this is such a great Debt, that you have not paid enough.

3. It will be further manifest, that he cleared all the score, by this, That when he had offered up himself, and rose again from the dead, he was *received up into glory*. Now he could never have come thither himself, nor have brought any else thither, if his Satisfaction had not been full; See *Heb.* 10. 12. *But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin for ever, sat down at the right hand of God:* that is, in token that he had *made the comers to him perfect*; for so you have it in *ver.* 14. If he had not, 'tis certain that he would have been in the Grave still.

5. This Freedom was to come by one that was to die, *but not for himself:* if he had died for himself, he had not been fit to die for others. His Death must be altogether for the excusing and delivering of those, who for their own Transgressions had deserved that the wrath of God should have fallen upon themselves. He must

must be a Surety for others, and one that could say, 'I am bound for such and such 'persons Debts; and being so, I do acknow-'ledge they are *mine*, and I take them upon '*my self*, and here I come to discharge them. Why, thus it was with Christ, and therefore Freedom comes by him; he laid down his Life, but he tells you, 'twas for his *sheep*, *Joh.* 10. 15. He was not indebted a farthing token to God upon his own account: Law and Justice had nothing to say to him, nor nothing to do with him, but only as he stood in our stead, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *He was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor.* Mark, for *your sakes.* What had he done to offend God? or to suffer such a cruel, and painful, and cursed death as he did? Let all his Life be scanned to the utmost, he would have been found innocent, *holy*, *harmless*, *undefiled*, *separate from sinners.* And had it not been for others, in whose behalf he indured all that Agony and bloody Sweat which he underwent, it had nor consisted with the Justice of God to lay such things upon him. But since he would put himself in our place, out of his great love to poor lost sinners, therefore 'twas fit that God should deal thus severely with him as he did: and 'twas well for us that he *laid*

*on ſoundly* upon Chriſt, and did not ſpare him at all. See that Scripture, *Iſa.* 53. 5. *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities, the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him; and with his ſtripes we are healed.* Mark here, how Juſtice *laid it on* upon Chriſt. *q. d.* What? are you ſtept in to bear theſe blows that ſinners have deſerved ſhould fall upon them? Well, I'll not ſpare you a jot the more, becauſe you are my Son: and then he falls to it in ſuch a manner, as that he *wounded* him, and *bruiſed* him; he *cruſted* him as it were, *between the milſtones* of his wrath for our iniquities, that he made him the ſaddeſt Spectacle to look upon that ever was. And I ſay, 'twas well for us that Juſtice laſhed Chriſt in this dreadful manner; for, *with theſe ſtripes we are healed*: they were wounding ſtripes to Chriſt, but they are healing ſtripes to us: that Blood that this ſin-revenging Hand fetch'd from Chriſt, turns to be a precious Salve for our grievous Sore. Hence 'tis clear, that Chriſt is the very Redeemer, becauſe 'twas not for himſelf that all this was done to him; See *Dan.* 9. 26.—*cut off, but not for himſelf.*

6. This

6. This Freedom was to come by *one who was witneſſed to by all the Prophets under the Old Teſtament*, and to whom all things were to agree which they foretold: Now thus it was with Chriſt, and therefore Freedom comes by *him*. See *Act.* 10. 43. *To him gave all the Prophets witneſs*, &c. And therefore, you do often meet with this in the Story of Chriſt's Life and Death recorded in the Goſpel; this and that was done, that the ſaying of ſuch and ſuch a Prophet might be fulfilled, and that ſuch a Scripture might be fulfilled; all was fulfilled in Chriſt. The Prophecies of the Old Teſtament, they foretold out of what Nation he that was to be the Redeemer ſhould ariſe, *viz.* from among the Jews: So did Chriſt, ſaith the New Teſtament. The Prophecies of the Old Teſtament foretold, that he muſt be of the houſe of *David*, and of the tribe of *Judah*: So was Chriſt, ſaith the New Teſtament. That he was to be born of a *Virgin*; So was Chriſt, ſaith the New Teſtament. That the place where he muſt be born, muſt be *Bethlehem*; and there the New Teſtament tells us Chriſt was born. I cannot ſtand to quote Places about theſe and many other things of this ſort: ſtudy the Word for this; compare

Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament together, you'll ſee how all doth exactly agree to Chriſt. And therefore he is the *true Redeemer*; and this Jeſus whom I preach unto you, is *Chriſt*. But I ſhall go no further in this.

There are other Arguments that do more remotely prove, that Freedom comes by Chriſt. I will but hint at four.

1. If it doth not, why then obſerve upon how many things this would *caſt a lie*. It would caſt a lie upon *all the Miniſtry* that preach the Goſpel: They tell you that Freedom comes by Chriſt, and are, or ſhould be earneſt with you to ſtir you up to come to him for Salvation. What? do you think they are all Deceivers? Have they all conſpired together throughout the World, to put a cheat upon People? Why, how can this be? They never met all together, nor poſſibly could, to plot ſuch a buſineſs. It caſts a lie upon all the *Apoſtles*, upon all the *Prophets*. It would caſt a lie upon all the *Ordinances* of Chriſt, for they all lead to him. It would caſt a lie upon the *Scriptures*, for they ſpeak of him. It would caſt a lie upon the *Angels* in Heaven, for they ſang at his Birth, *Glory to God in the higheſt*, &c. It would caſt a lie

lie upon *Christ*, for he told the World that he was the *Redeemer: I am the light of the world*; and *I am that bread of life*; and *I am the resurrection and the life*; and *I am the way, and the truth, and the life.* Yea, it would cast a lie upon *God* himself; for he said, this was *his beloved Son*, and owned him by a Voice from Heaven.

2. If Freedom doth not come by Christ, then *all the Saints hope is lost.* They have *all* placed their hope in him, 1 *Tim.* 1. 2. They hope that they shall have eternal life by believing in him; they hope that it won't be long now, before he will come again and receive them to himself, according to his Promise, that where he is, there they may be also. They are described there in *Tit.* 2. 13. to be a People *looking for the blessed hope, and glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* And oh, how many breathings and longings of Soul have they, and do they send forth to him! and, *having the first fruits of the Spirit, they groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body*, Rom. 8. 23. And what? shall all this be *lost.*

3. If Freedom did not come by Christ, certainly the Devil would not keep such a

do to hinder Souls from coming to him. He makes this his great buſineſs, *to blind the minds of them that believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them,* 2 Cor. 4. 4. But they might *come, and come* to Chriſt, and he would put forth no power, nor uſe no ſubtilty to hinder them at all, if there were no Freedom to be found in him. The Devil knows 'tis otherwiſe; and therefore he ſets all his devices a-work to block up that way.

4. If Freedom did not come by Chriſt, then *no Soul that comes to him could find reſt in him:* But every Soul that comes to him, finds reſt in him, *Heb.* 4. 3. Yea, they find a glorious reſt in him, as God promiſed they ſhould, *Iſa.* 11. 10. *Obj.* Why, but there are many that come to Chriſt, and yet are much diſturb'd, and full of diſquieting thoughts. *Anſ.* Yea, that's true, and yet notwithſtanding they do find reſt in Chriſt; for, ask ſuch a perſon in the midſt of all his fears, It is thus and thus with you, ay, but would you change? Would you place your hope in another? Oh! no: here he deſires to pitch for ever. Well then, he finds *reſt* here, as to the *Objection*; and all his trouble is not, that

that he fears whether there be reſt in Chriſt, but whether he be *truly come* to him.

To the Fourth, After what manner this Freedom is in Chriſt, I anſwer, 1. 'Tis in Chriſt *perſonally*; *i. e.* Jeſus Chriſt who is the Second Perſon in the Godhead, is he who is our Deliverer and Redeemer. When a poor Creature is delivered by ſome one out of his Slavery, certainly he muſt needs deſire to know who was the perſon that did it. Now the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the very perſon that hath done this great Work for us; as he ſaid to the woman of *Samaria*, *Joh.* 4. 26. when ſhe ſpake of the *Meſſias* or Redeemer that was to come, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* Now, the reaſon why I mention this, that *our Freedom is in the perſon of Chriſt*, is in order to the anſwering of one Queſtion that may profitably be propounded here; which is this,

*Queſt.* Whether our Redemption be ſo to be appropriated to Chriſt, the Second Perſon in the Godhead, as that the other Perſons, namely, the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, had nothing, or have nothing to do in it?

*Anſw.*

*Anſw.* 1. Our Freedom comes in ſome reſpects, from the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, as well as from the Son, or from all the three Perſons jointly. 2. In other reſpects, it comes from Chriſt perſonally and peculiarly; ſo as that, in ſome ſenſe, he is and muſt be looked upon as more immediately our Redeemer. I will open theſe two things a little.

1. Our Freedom comes from all the three Perſons. That it comes from Chriſt, you know that's the whole buſineſs of this *4th* Branch of the Doctrine; and much hath been ſpoken to it already. But now for the *Father* and the *Holy Ghoſt*, they are alſo concerned in this Freedom. For the *Father*, ſee that place, *Col.* 1. 12, 23. *Giving thanks unto the Father,—who hath delivered us from the power of darkneſs*, &c. And for the Holy Ghoſt, you read, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. that where he comes into the heart, he brings Liberty with him: So that the giving of this Freedom is, in ſome reſpects, the joint work of all the Perſons. I ſhall ſhew you what you are to gather from this by and by, that they all have a hand in it. But, firſt, I will ſhew you what hand the Father and the Holy Ghoſt have in conjunction with Jeſus Chriſt about this Freedom; and

and then how Christ, as I said, is more *personally* and peculiarly concerned in it.

For God the *Father*, I shall give you five things, for his having a hand in this Work.

1. He did *appoint*, design and choose the Son to be our Redeemer: he did in his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, contrive the way for the bringing of those that should believe, out of the misery that they were fallen into by sin, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. So that our Redemption was from the Father, as the Original and Fountain of it. He broke, as it were, this Business to his Son, and by his own consent he pitched upon him to be the Saviour and Mediator. You may observe in many places of the Old Testament, that the Father is brought in, speaking to Christ as one that he had called and chosen to this Work, *Isa.* 42. 6, 7. and 49. 8, 9. and 55. 4, 5. and 61. 1. *Zech.* 9. 11. By these places you may see, that the Father and the Son did, as it were, agree together from all Eternity about this thing; and took, as I may say, a delight to confer together in Heaven about it. There were many wonderful things done between them even there: there this admirable Design was laid; and there Christ, as it were, ingaged

ingaged and entred into Covenant with his Father, that he would undertake and faithfully perform this great Work: and there the Father paſt his promiſe to the Son, that thoſe whom he ſhould redeem ſhould have eternal Life, *Tit.* 1. 2. And there the Father did, as it were, give in to the Son, the Number, Liſt or Roll of all the perſons that were to be redeemed, *Joh.* 17. 6. So that when Chriſt came into the World, he knew for whom he was to die, and for whom he was to make interceſſion; that it was not for all the World, but for them whom the Father had given him: and he knew who they were, as he ſaith, *Joh.* 10. when he ſpeaks that he was to lay down his Life for the *Sheep*, *ver.* 15. *I know my ſheep*, *ver.* 14. he muſt needs know them, for he ſtood charged with every one of them, *Joh.* 6. 39. So that Chriſt was a long time ſeparated to this Work before he went about it, even by the everlaſting Decree and Purpoſe of his Father, 1 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10. Oh! what ancient Mercy this Mercy by Chriſt is!. It hath been laid up for the Saints of old, before the World began. 'Tis from everlaſting; and as 'tis from everlaſting, ſo 'tis to everlaſting, *Pſal.* 103. 17.

2. The

2. The Father did *fit* his Son, and fit him with all that was needful to go about such a Work. As God never sends or calls any to an Imployment, but he furnishes them with what is necessary for the discharging of it: So he did this in a singular and eminent manner to Christ: the work that he had to do, would require a deal to be laid out upon it; he had need bring enough with him, and so he did: See *Col.* 1. 19. *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.* And in *Joh.* 3. 34. you read, that the Father gave him the Spirit *without measure:* he dealt otherwise with him, than he doth with the rest of his Children. 'Tis true, he bestows his Spirit, and the Gifts and Graces of it upon them, but to them he *measures* it, *Rom.* 12. 3. He doth *divide and distribute to them*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 11. and he gives it so to them, that they cannot say one to another, *I have no need of thee.* But in his giving to Christ, he observed no *number*, no *weight*, no *measure*; he gave him all, all Power, all Riches, all Righteousness: he dealt with us by retail, as I may so say, but he dealt with Christ by whole-sale; he makes us to be as the Streams, or small Rivers; but he made him the Sea; he hid all the treasures of Wisdom

dom and Knowledge in him. See that one place more how Christ was fitted, *Isa.* 11.2. *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.* He made him able to *speak so as never man spake*; he made him able to comfort a wounded Spirit, so as never man comforted, *Isa.* 50.4. he made him able to suffer so, as never man suffered; he made him able to live so, as never man lived.

3. The Father did *assist* and stand by him, in the doing of all that he did in the Work of our Redemption: he did not set him to work, and then forsake him; but his Presence and Power went along with him. 'Tis true, he cried out upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* and at that time he had an eclipse and withdrawment of the Presence of his Father: but this was not a total and a final desertion; for even then, he could look upon God as his God, and act his Faith in him; which shews, that even then, he was supported and inabled to go through with his most bitter Sufferings. Now, for the Assistance that he had from his Father, you have divers places, as *Isa.* 42.1.

*Behold*

*Behold my ſervant whom I uphold*: that is, I will go along with him in his work, with my *upholding-power*. God the Father lookt after him, to carry him through what he ſent him about; and ſee what he undertakes for him, in *ver.* 4. *He ſhall not fail*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Tho 'tis a very hard Work that he hath to do, yet I'll keep him from fainting in it; and ſo he promiſes, in *ver.* 6. that he would *hold his hand* for him, as it were, to keep it from being weak or ſhaking. And in the confidence and full aſſurance of this, that he ſhould have his Fathers help, you ſhall ſee how reſolvedly and couragiouſly he goes to the Work, *Iſa.* 58. 5, to 10.

4. The Father did accept this redeeming-work at the hands of his Son, as that in which he was ſatisfied; as who ſhould ſay, I have enough, I demand no more: he took great content in what he had don, and ſo he doth ſtill. There be two excellent places for this; one in *Joh.* 10. 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life*, &c. And another in *Eph.* 5. 2. *Chriſt hath given himſelf for us an offering and a ſacrifice to God for* a ſweet ſmelling ſavour. Chriſt could not have pleaſed his Father better, than by perform-

ing

ing this Work. Oh, what a lovely delightful thing 'tis to his Soul, to see what his Son hath done for poor sinners!

5. He did *reward* him for his pains. You find Christ, when he had done his Work, he calls for his Reward, *Joh.* 17. 4,5. And if you look into *Rev.* 3. 21. you shall see Christ saith, he hath it; *As I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.* In this place, he tells *John* in his Revelation to him from Heaven, and he bids *John* to tell it from him to the Church to whom he was to write, That he was well paid for all the good and great Service that he had performed in the work of our Redemption. God the Father had of old promised to him, that he should have a large Recompence for it, as you may read, *Isa.* 53. 12. *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great; he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.* And if you bring this to the New Testament, you shall see what this *Recompence* was, and how fully 'twas paid in to him, and how many ways God honoured him; how he raised him from the dead again, and took him into Heaven, and set him down at his own right Hand on the Throne of the Majesty on high,

high, and made him the Head of his Body, the Church, and placed him far above all Principalities and Powers, *&c. Eph.* 2. 20, 21, 22. and appointed him to be the Judge of all, and he to whom all muſt bow: and all this was by way of *Reward* to him for what he had done and ſuffered in the great Work of bringing this Freedom to us. See *Phil.* 2. 7, 8. there you have an account of the great Service that he did about it; and then he brings in *ver.* 9, 10, 11. with a *wherefore*, *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name*: *i. e.* He conſidered how greatly his Son had been humbled for our ſakes, and upon that account he promoted him to this high degree of Exaltation. Thus you ſee the *Father* had a hand alſo in this *Freedom.*

And then for the *Holy Ghoſt*, he doth much about it too. For, it is the Spirit that doth awaken and convince the Soul that is to be ſaved, to ſee its loſt and undone condition by nature; and ſhews it, by its own illumination, "Why, thou art "one that art in bondage. That proves this by undeniable Evidence: "What! "live ſo as thou haſt and doſt, and not be "in this ſpiritual Bondage! Oh! it cannot

"be. Why, thou haſt the manifeſt ſigns "and tokens of a perſon in ſlavery: what's "the meaning that thou art ſo in love with "ſin, and under the power and dominion "of theſe and theſe Luſts? that thou art "ſo given to ſuch and ſuch wicked Ways, "and ſo contrary to all that is good? That "thou haſt ſuch an unclean Heart, and ſuch "a diſobedient Life, ſuch a dark Mind, "ſuch vile Affections, ſuch a rebellious "Will? Why, doth not this ſpeak that "thou art an Enemy to God, and a Child "of Wrath? Would, or could any Man "or Woman live ſuch a carnal, vain Con-"verſation as thine is, if they were not "in an unregenerate condition? There-fore you read, *Joh.* 16. 9. that it is the Spirit that *reproves the world of ſin.*

Again; It is the Spirit that *humbles the ſoul* that is to be ſaved; that abaſes and layes it low in the ſight of its own ſin and miſery, that makes ſin grievous and odious to it, and that brings the Soul un-der a ſenſe of that wrath that belongs to the workers of iniquity: So that it ſhall cry out, "Oh, what have I done! Oh, "what have I deſerved! what a dange-"rous caſe am I in! Here's this and that "ſin forbidden by God, and yet committed

"by

"by me, and thereupon the Law threatens "thus and thus. Oh, how ſhall I eſcape! "Here's this and that Duty commanded by "God, and yet neglected by me, and there- "upon the Law threatens thus and thus "again. Oh, what ſhall become of me! Hence that ſorrow and heavineſs that is in ſuch a Soul now, is called the *ſpirit* of heavineſs, *Iſa.* 61. 3. to note, that this heavineſs comes from the Spirit: 'tis he that ſets the Soul a mourning thus.

Again; It is the Spirit that diſcovers to the Soul that is to be ſaved, where its *remedy* is for all this; that acquaints it with the Goſpel and Salvation by Chriſt, and what things God *hath freely given* to his People in and by his Son, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. That ſhews it, "Tho thou art ſuch a great ſin- "ner, yet there is a great Saviour; one "that is a Phyſician, appointed to cure "ſuch Diſeaſes as thine are; one that's a "Surety, appointed to pay ſuch Debts as "thine are. 'Tis ſaid here, that the Spirit makes thoſe who ſhall be ſaved, to *know* ſuch things as theſe are; what God hath done for the raiſing and recovering of poor ſinners, in a way of free Grace; what a glorious Contrivance he hath found out by Jeſus Chriſt, revealed in the Go-

ſpel, to ſhew mercy to them: and indeed, that's a *knowing* that is worth the having, to *know* theſe things ſo, as the Spirit makes them known to the People of God. There be many that have a kind of Knowledge of theſe things by bare reading of them, and hearing of them, and by common Illumination of the Spirit; but this *knowing* here, is another manner of thing.

Again; It is the Spirit that doth *help and inable the Soul to look out* for this Chriſt, to uſe all the means, and to go all the ways that may be, to come to this Chriſt, and to get an intereſt in him; that works in it *faith* to lay hold upon him, and that makes the Soul able to take him, *Eph.* 3. 16, 17. *That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be ſtrengthned with might by his ſpirit in the inner man, that Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith.* Mark, 'tis the Spirit that by his might doth ſtrengthen the inner man, that *Chriſt may dwell in the heart by faith.* Take notice by the way, what a deal of Power there muſt go out from this Spirit, to make a Soul believe with the true ſaving Faith. They that have the falſe Faith, they can believe with eaſe; there needs not an Almighty Arm to be ſtretched out to work their

their Faith, they give it themſelves, and have had it all their days; they find no difficulty either in the getting of it, or in the keeping of it. But the true Faith comes into the hearts of Saints by no leſs a ſtrength than that which God by his Spirit puts forth: See *Eph.* 1. 19, 20.

Again; It is the Spirit that *ſeals* and witneſſes to the Soul, the Aſſurance that this Freedom doth belong to it, and that proves to the Soul that it is ſo, by ſuch Evidences as it gives out of the Word, *Eph.* 1. 13. This is he that carries, as I may ſay, God's *Privy Seal*, and when, and to whom he pleaſes he gives it; but he gives it to none but them that are ſanctified: *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhow them his covenant.* And this is an unſpeakable mercy, to have the Spirits Seal ſet to our Graces; to have ones *repentance ſealed* for a true Repentance, and ones *faith ſealed* for a true Faith, and ones *comfort ſealed* for true Comfort, and ones *intereſt in Chriſt ſealed up*: We muſt make our ſtate of Grace ſure *by Signs*, but the Spirit can make it ſure *by Seal.*

Again; It is the Spirit that *ingages and ſtirs up* the Soul to ſuch a walking as is for

for one that is brought into a ſtate of Freedom: therefore, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. the People of God are ſaid to have the ſanctification of *the Spirit* unto obedience. And Oh! how much are they beholding unto this Spirit, for many heavenly Notions that he gives in to them; and for freſh quicknings, when they find abundance of deadneſs, and formality in their Duties hath ſeiſed upon them. This Spirit is often calling upon the Saints to pray more fervently, to hear more profitably, to walk more cloſely, to bring forth more fruit to God, who hath done ſo much for them. It often minds them of their Mercies, that they may be more ſtirred up to Duties; and of the hope of their Calling, that ſo they may walk more worthy of it.

Again; It is the Spirit that *preſerves* and keeps them in the ſtate of Freedom, that they ſhall not loſe it again; and that makes them to perſevere to the end in a holy life, that ſo they may come at laſt to the full injoyment of all that their dear Redeemer hath purchaſed and prepared for them. This Spirit is that Power of God, by which they are ſaid through Faith to be kept unto Salvation; See *Ezek.* 36. 27.

Thus

Thus you see, that both the Father and the Holy Ghost have a hand in this Freedom.

But yet (according to the second thing that was said, in answer to the Question) our Freedom in other respects comes from Christ *personally* and peculiarly; so as that in some sense, he is and must be look'd upon as more immediatly our Redeemer; for he did that in his Person, which the other Persons did not. They did not take our nature, and come in the likeness of sinful flesh, but the Son did, *Rom.* 8. 3. and therefore, 'twas not they, but he that was made under the Law, and that yielded perfect obedience to it: neither did they, but he *died* that accursed death upon the Cross *for our sins*; and 'twas he, and not they, that *rose again the third day*, and that afterwards *ascended* into Heaven; and 'tis he, and not they, that is the *Mediator betwixt God and man*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. and divers such things must be appropriated to the Person of Christ. 'Twas he that was put into the Offices of a *Prophet*, *Priest* and *King*; and these things are everywhere in the Scripture kept so distinct from the other Persons, as that Christ is the Doer and Executor of them. So that our Freedom comes

by him (as I have already ſhewed upon this Fourth Branch of the Doctrine) in a more eminent way, than by the Father or the Holy Ghoſt; tho they have all of them, as I have ſaid, in ſome reſpects, a very great hand in it. And from that, I would now deſire you to take three Conſiderations.

All the three Perſons are concerned in the Freedom that comes by Chriſt: why, then conſider,

1. That there was not a word ſpoken in Heaven againſt the recovering of poor Sinners out of their loſt condition; not a word againſt ſhewing Mercy to them. You know; there be many great things upon Earth that come to a *Propoſition*, but then they meet with an *Oppoſition*, and ſuch an Oppoſition, that the thing propounded is daſh'd all to pieces. But it was not ſo in Heaven: there every one was for it; the Father was for it, the Son was for it, and the Holy Ghoſt was for it; and yet every one might have been againſt it. And Oh, how much might have been ſaid to have ſpoiled all; there was enough might have been alledged, to have turned all their hearts againſt us: but every one was willing that the buſineſs of our Redemption

ption ſhould go forward, all went on our ſide. You may therefore be fully aſſured, that tho there was none but the ſecond Perſon that did viſibly appear in the Work of our Redemption, yet that they are all well-wiſhers to it. Here's no place left for doubting, whether their hearts be as inclinable towards your Salvation, as Chriſt did expreſs, by word of mouth, that his heart was in the days of his Fleſh: for, they do all, by mutual conſent, unite together in this Deſign of doing your Souls good, and the voice of one, is the voice of all. And when Chriſt did invite and call poor Sinners to come unto him, and declared ſo much readineſs to receive and imbrace all that were weary and heavy laden; you muſt know, that he did not only do this to ſhow his own kindneſs and good-will to the Children of Men, but alſo to ſhew what kindneſs and good will the other Perſons had in their hearts towards them too. And if you look into 1 *Joh.* 5. 7. you ſhall find them all joined together in this matter of Salvation by Chriſt, compared with *ver.* 11. What an ingagement then is it to us to accept of this Salvation, when we have, as I may ſay, three ſuch *great Suitors* ſeeking to us; the *Father* ſending

ſending his *Son*, and the *Son* coming from the *Father*, and now Chriſt by his *Spirit* knocking at the door of our Hearts for an entrance. Oh, that as they are all willing that we ſhould be ſaved, we were all willing to cloſe with this Salvation!

2. Since they all have a hand in it, then in our labouring to get the benefit of Chriſt's Redemption, we muſt look to all the three Perſons: 'tis not only Chriſt in particular that we muſt have an eye to, but alſo to the *Father* and to the *Holy Ghoſt*. And we muſt look to them all two ways; 1. In the way of *Prayer*. 2. In the way of *Thanksgiving*.

As for *Prayer*; why, we muſt pray to the *Father*, that he would draw us to his Son; as Chriſt ſaith, *Joh.* 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me draw him.* We muſt pray to the *Son*, that he would have mercy upon us, and heal us, and that he would help our Unbelief; as you read they did in the Goſpel, when he was here in his bodily Preſence. We muſt pray to the *Holy Ghoſt*, to inlighten our Minds in the ſaving underſtanding of Chriſt and the Goſpel, to ſanctifie us and make us obedient to the word of Grace, and effectually to apply

to

to us the Redemption that comes by Christ, and all the benefits of it. But here we must take heed, that when we do thus express our selves (as sometimes we may) in such kind of Petitions as are directed more particularly to one Person, we don't think that the other Persons are at that time excluded.

And then we must look to all the three Persons, in a way of *Thanksgiving*: For if every one hath a hand in our Redemption, then we are beholding to every one of them; and so we may not only make an Acknowledgment of it to the whole *Godhead* jointly, but also to *each* of the Persons particularly; and so you shall see, the People of God have sometimes done. As for Thanksgiving to the *Father*, see *Eph.* 1. 3. and for Thanksgiving to the *Son*, *Rev.* 1. 5, 6. And tho we have not, as I remember, any Scripture, in which the *Holy Ghost* is given thanks to in this particular way of naming of him; yet, you must know, that in those places in which Praise is rendred unto God, he is there to be understood. Well then, as I said, we should be admiring and praising every one of them for this Work, and saying, Oh, blessed be the *Father*, that sent his only begotten

gotten Son out of his Bosom, to be a Saviour to Mankind! And Oh, blessed be Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who laid down his Life to be a Ransom for us! And Oh, blessed be the *Holy Ghost*, which hath given to any of our Souls the application, comfort, and sealing up of this Redemption! Blessed be that *one God* in *three Persons* for ever and ever. Amen.

3. If there be such a *Three* that join together to further the Saints Salvation; then *another Three* that join together to hinder their Salvation, shall not be able to do it. There is a *Three* that would fain keep every Child of God out of Heaven; the *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*: and 'tis true, they are three great and mighty Enemies; howbeit, they attain not to the *first Three*, 1 *Chron.* 11. 21. Oh! you that fear God, when you think what *Three* there are against you, and thereupon are ready to be disheartned; why, think what *Three* there are for you, and then be comforted. What are the *Three below* to the *Three above*? The Saints do too little mind what great Friends and Helps are ingaged on their side. It daunted all the Children of *Israel* to see that great *Goliath* coming against them, because they

they looked no higher than themselves: but little *David* went forth with Courage and Resolution to meet him, because he knew that he had God on his side, 1 *Sam.* 17. 45. *Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts*; and so he prevailed. This is the Cordial that true Christians must take along with them, in their journey to Heaven, to keep them from fainting, That Father, Son and Spirit are all ingaged in the matters of their Salvation. And 'tis certain, that they would not be so fearful and so weak in their work as they are apt to be, if they did but know their strength. And so this is the first thing that shews, After what manner this Freedom is in Christ: 'Tis in him *Personally*.

2. This Freedom is in Christ *abundantly*: So *Paul* found it, when the Lord had mercy on him, 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. You know, the manner of men is, when they give others of their good things, to give but a little of them: it may be, they have not such a store of their own, as to be able to part with much. But 'tis not so with Christ; this Freedom is stor'd up in him, he hath Treasures of it: 'tis much that Christ

Christ can do for Souls; that place is very full for it, *Heb.* 7. 25. *He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.* The word in the Greek is, as if you should read it, He is able to save to the *finishing or perfecting of all*, εἰς τὸ παντελὲς. Whatever is in Christ, 'tis in him abundantly. Consider four things, and you'll see 'tis thus with him in respect of this Freedom: 'tis in him *plentifully.*

1. He can save more than ever shall be saved. The reason why such multitudes do post and flock to Hell, is not because there was not enough in Christ to keep them from it, but because they will not be *ruled* by him; they do not follow this Physicians Prescriptions. Here upon Earth, though the Patient makes the best use that can be of the Physician, and follows his Prescriptions and Advice to a tittle, and doth all things to the exactest obedience; yet many times the Patient dies notwithstanding, or he is never the more delivered from the pain and danger of his Disease; as it was with the Woman that had the bloody Issue, *Mark* 5. 25, 26. And the Disease is so inveterate and malignant, that all the skill of the Doctors is not able to cure them or preserve them. But here, no

Soul

Soul is loſt for want of Skill or Power in the Phyſician; but 'tis becauſe they would not do as he would have them; they would not ſubmit to his Cure, nor accept of his Help: they ſhould have found *him* a Healer, if he had found *them* obedient, *Pſal.* 81. 11, 12.

*Obj.* But you may ſay, If Chriſt hath ſuch a Power, he could have made them obedient if he pleaſed.

*Anſ.* That's true, he could have done ſo, and ſo he doth to ſome; he doth make them obedient and willing, that he will not only give *Advice*, but they ſhall take *Advice*, and give up themſelves to be wholly at Chriſt's direction and counſel; and where-ever this is wrought in the Soul, it is the free Grace and diſtinguiſhing Love of God. The overcoming of the Will to cloſe with Chriſt, is indeed the breaking forth of God's eternal Election, and he will do this in all whom he hath choſen: but when God ſees, that tho men cannot of themſelves receive Chriſt, yet they do wickedly and wilfully reſiſt the offers of his Grace, and through the pride of their Hearts, will not cry to him to make them willing, and to bring down the ſtubbornneſs and rebellion of their ſpirits; who will dare

dare to blame the Lord if he leave them to themselves? [illegible] sure, as 'tis unspeakable Mercy in God to draw some to willingness; So 'tis a very righteous thing in him to leave others to their wilfulness. God is not bound to save any man against his will; and whom he pleases he may make willing, and whom he pleases he may let alone in their rebellion: and so they don't perish because Christ could not save them, but because they would not be saved; and they manifested that they would not, because they *always resisted the Holy Ghost*, Acts 7. 51.

*Obj.* But how doth this consist with that great willingness that is in Christ to save Sinners (of which we are so often told) that so many Sinners should perish, and yet Christ could save them?

*Ans.* 1. The willingness that is in Christ to save Sinners, must especially and principally, as I conceive, be understood of those kind of Sinners, who seek to him out of a sense of their need of his Salvation, and of their undone condition without him; as appears from *Matth.* 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* As the Lord Jesus, in the days of his Flesh, did upon

upon all occasions of the coming of the diseased persons to him, manifest his great readiness to cure them, and he turned away none that offered themselves to him; by them he would be prevailed with, and by them he would be touched; and as many as touched him, were made perfectly whole of whatever Disease they had: So, whoever they be, whatever spiritual Plagues they have, that do humbly and sensibly offer themselves to Christ as the Physician of their Souls, and cry to him, Lord Jesus, be intreated to cure me of a blind Mind, of a hard Heart, of the strong Possession that the Devil hath taken hold of me by such a sin, and such a sin; 'tis certain, that Jesus Christ doth, as I may say, stand prepared to help such a Soul, and to have mercy upon him, and heal him. And therefore you must know, that Jesus Christ requires this at your hands, that you who would have Mercy and Salvation from him, should repair to him, and come and spread, as it were, your Wounds before him, and implore his help. You must not stay away from Christ, and keep at a distance from him, but go and tell him the misery that your Souls are in, and beseech him to shew his skill upon you; and

this will be the way to get him to be moved with compaſſion towards you: Then you'll find, that he hath a willingneſs in his heart to do you good; and the more importunate you are with him, the more hopes you will have to ſpeed with him; yea, you need not doubt or fear, if you do ſincerely make out to him for his help, but you ſhall have it; you are to believe that you ſhall: And if you do not thus look out for help in Chriſt, but neglect coming to him that is appointed of God to ſave you; as you will certainly periſh, ſo, tho you ſhall, yet your deſtruction doth not proceed from a want of willingneſs in Chriſt to ſave you: tho I confeſs, this willingneſs that is in Chriſt to ſave even them that ſhall never be ſaved, is not the ſame with that which is in him to ſave thoſe who are to be ſaved. You muſt take notice, that this willingneſs of Chriſt to ſave ſinners, may be conſidered two ways.

1. There is an *abſolute* willingneſs in Chriſt to ſave ſome ſinners, and theſe ſinners are thoſe whom God hath, from all eternity, choſen to life; and who thereupon do come to Chriſt, that they might have life, being awakened and ſtirred up there-

thereunto by the inward and effectual working of Gods Spirit and Grace upon their hearts. Now there is in Christ an *absolute* willingneſs to ſave all ſuch; he is fully reſolved to be *wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption to them*, Joh. 6. 37.

2. There is a *conditional* willingneſs in Christ to ſave other ſinners, yea all ſinners, yea even thoſe that ſhall never be ſaved; by which Chriſt ſtands ready to receive, and pardon, and imbrace them, in caſe they come to him, and repent and believe the Goſpel: which they never doing, through the hardneſs and impenitency of their hearts, to which they are juſtly left, they are eternally loſt, tho Chriſt could have ſaved them, and would have ſaved them, if the Condition had been performed, *Luk.* 13. 34.

Secondly, it will appear that this Freedom is in Chriſt abundantly, if we conſider how he and his Salvation are magnified and extolled in Scripture. You ſhall find the Word of GOD ſpeaking very honourably of both, as indeed he and his Salvation deſerve the higheſt Praiſe. When Chriſt himſelf, as a Redeemer, is ſpoken of, ſee the great commendation that is

given of him; I shall need to lead you but to that one Epistle to the *Hebrews* for it; See *chap.* 4. 15. and *chap.* 7. 26. and *chap.* 8. 1, 2, 6. and *chap.* 9. 14. And then, as he himself who is the Saviour, is thus set forth with such magnificent Expressions; So the Salvation and Redemption that comes by him likewise, *Heb.* 2. 3. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* He speaks of it, as that which cannot be told what manner of thing 'tis, for the Worth and Value of it; he is so taken up with the admiration of it, that he wants a fit comparison to set it out by. *So great salvation*; as if he should have said, I cannot tell you how great 'tis, 'tis so great. And in 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold,——but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* He makes all the Silver and Gold, and precious things of the World as nothing, to this Redemption which the Blood of Christ hath purchased for us.

Thirdly, there must needs be abundant Freedom in Christ, if we consider, that this Redemption of his doth more good to them that partake of it, than ever the Fall of *Adam* did them hurt. It was indeed

deed an unſpeakable deal of miſery that was brought in by the Tranſgreſſion of our firſt Parents; by it came Sin, by it came Death and Condemnation. Beloved, there is no evil either of Sin or of Puniſhment, either in this World or in that to come, but it is the woful effect and fruit of that Fall. Oh, that God would ſhew us what a miſerable condition we are in by the Fall! Oh, how ignorant is the World of this! How unawakened about it! Little do the moſt conſider, where it is that *Adam* hath left them; what wretched, curſed Creatures they are upon that account; and Oh, how little care do People generally take, or how little haſte do they make to get out of it! How ſecure do the moſt continue upon that ſinking ground, as if there were no danger towards them! Well, but now this Redemption by Chriſt hath more good in it, for them that are or ſhall be delivered by it, than that had hurt in it. This ſecond *Adam* ſets them into a better condition, than ever they were before they fell: He doth not only make up their loſs again, but with the greateſt advantage. Read that excellent place, *Rom.* 5. 15. to the end.

Fourthly, 'Tis ſuch abundant Redemp-

ption that is in Christ, that he can save those that despair of ever being saved; not only can he save those who deserve to be damned, but even such as despair of being saved. Oh, how many be there, that have lain under most dreadful fears of everlasting condemnation! that when they have been brought to see their sins, as it were, set in order before them, and to see the wrath of God, as it were, flaming against them; they have concluded, that they should as certainly go to Hell, as if they were there already. And, Oh, the bitter cryes that they have had upon this! Oh, the anguish and sorrow that their Souls have been filled with, *What shall become of me?* &c. They have roared by reason of the disquietness of their hearts; they could not tell how to eat, or drink, or sleep, for the fearful looking for of Judgment and of Wrath that should devour them; and yet, after all this, have been saved: the great Redeemer hath given them rest from their fear, and from their sorrow, and from the hard bondage wherein they were made to serve, *Heb.* 2. 15. And it may be, here may be some or other amongst you that are full of trembling thoughts, and very ready to speak about your

your Salvation, as if there were no hope. I know that many poor Souls do go under this load; they can't tell how to think that they ſhall ever be ſaved. Oh, but conſider, there is ſuch abundance of Freedom in Chriſt, that he can ſave thoſe who deſpair of being ſaved: and therefore be revived in thy hopes, thou poor diſheartned Soul; and becauſe of this, ſay as *Jonah* did, *chap.* 2. 3, 4. *For thou hadſt caſt me into the deep, in the midſt of the ſeas, and the floods compaſſed me about: all thy billows and thy waves paſſed over me. Then I ſaid, I am caſt out of thy ſight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.*

3. This Freedom is in Chriſt *freely*; the very word doth carry this along with it. Chriſt doth not releaſe Souls, as men uſe to give Freedom to the Bodies of them they have kept in priſon; if they will have their Liberty, they muſt pay their Fees. That which God ſpeaks of *Cyrus*, in *Iſa.* 45. 13. is eminently true of Chriſt, *He ſhall let go my captives, not for price or reward.* Chriſt doth not ask Souls, *What will you give me*, if I will do this for you? But he is willing to do it *for nothing*; he bids them *come and buy*, but 'tis *without money*

*money and without price*; he is as glad to free poor ſinners, as they are to be freed by him. And there be three Reaſons, why Chriſt doth all freely in the Work of Redemption: pray mark them.

1. Becauſe *he redeems them out of love*; therefore he aims at no reward. What is it that brings Chriſt to this Work? why 'tis Love, *Iſa.* 63. 9.—*in his love, and in his pity he redeemed them.* Tit. 4. 5. *Rev.* 1. 5. Now, *Love doth not work for wages.* Beloved, you muſt know, that when the Lord Jeſus was upon this redeeming-Work, his heart was as full of love towards poor ſinners, as it could hold: you may ſay of Chriſt in this reſpect, as they ſaid of him once when he was weeping at *Lazarus* his Grave, *Behold how he loved him,* Joh. 11. 35, 36. So when he was in his bloody Agony and Sweat, and hung pierced upon the Croſs, and was ſuffering all that wrath from God and Men; this might have been in the thoughts of them that beheld him, and no doubt was in the thoughts of them that believed in him, *Behold how he loves poor ſinners.* Now you know, when a man comes to do any thing for you out of love, why if you ask him, What will you have? Why, nothing, ſaith he, becauſe *I*

*love*

*love you.* Set one about any thing that you have to do, and if he doth not love you, why he will be paid to the full, and perhaps he will make unreaſonable demands too: But *Love* will labour for you for nothing; 'twill be glad of an opportunity to do you a kindneſs. Thus 'twas with Chriſt; he went through hard things for you; you cannot think what he ſuffered, that you might be ſaved: and yet, as *Jacob*'s ſerving ſo many years for *Rachel ſeemed to him but few days, for the love he had to her*; So, tho Chriſt ſuffered many things for you that are his, yet to him they ſeem leſs than they are, for the *Love* he hath to you.

2. Becauſe *Chriſt knew that he wrought for the poor*, Pſal. 72. 2, 4, 12, 13. Now the poor, why they muſt be helped freely. Alas! we have nothing to give him for his labour; and Chriſt knew this, and yet he did not do as many do; when the poor have need of their help, they are ready to ſay, *I'll not work for them, they can't pay me.* Men love to work moſt for the Rich, where they ſhall be ſure of their Money: But the Lord Jeſus, he doth the *poor mans work*; and ſo, tho they have a great deal of profit by it, yet he hath none to himſelf.

3. Be-

3. Becauſe the *great deſign of this redeeming Work which is in the hands of Chriſt, is the everlaſting exalting of Free Grace*, that Glory might be aſcribed unto God throughout all Ages, World without end: See *Eph.* 1. 6, 7. Therefore, all muſt come freely, that *Free Grace* might be advanced, that every one that is ſaved, might admire the riches of the Goodneſs and Love of GOD in Chriſt to their Souls. Oh, what Praiſes hath the Lord from his People, and will have to all Eternity, for this Free Grace! Oh, admire it more, you that are under it! It muſt be your work in Heaven, and we may be glad that it ſhall be our work in Heaven, when we conſider how ſhort we come in the admiring of it here upon Earth.

4. This Freedom is in Chriſt *only*. As to the Body, there may be many Phyſicians for one Diſeaſe; but as to the Soul, there is but one Phyſician for all Diſeaſes, *Iſa.* 45. latter part of *ver.* 21. and the 22. —*A Saviour there is none beſide me. Look unto me and be ye ſaved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none elſe.* We have many ſpiritual Sickneſſes, but 'tis Chriſt alone that can heal us; whoever doth

doth not come under his hand, he dies for it; and therefore, don't truſt to Phyſicians of no value. Many are apt to do for their Souls, as you read *Ahaziah* did, when he had gotten a very dangerous Fall; he ſent to the Idol gods, 2 *Kings* 1. 2. *Go, and inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron, whether I ſhall recover of this diſeaſe.* And what he got by this, you ſhall ſee, by what the Lord bids the Prophet go and tell him, *ver.* 3, 4. *Is it not becauſe there is not a God in Iſrael, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore, thus ſaith the Lord, Thou ſhalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely die.* Let me allude a little to this Scripture. Sinner, thou art juſt in the caſe of this man: thou haſt gotten a moſt dangerous Fall; thou art fallen from *the upper Chamber*; when God created thee at firſt, by that Image of his in which he made thee, he put thee into *the upper Chamber*. Oh, the high Preferment that thou waſt in, 'twas a heavenly condition that thou hadſt, to be without ſin, and to be like to God: but thou art fallen from hence, and thy Fall hath done thee a world of hurt: now when thou beginneſt to be ſick of thy Fall, and thereupon to think, that

that ſome courſe muſt be taken for the getting of a Cure; Oh, take heed to whom thou goeſt: for if thou goeſt to any but *the God in Iſrael*, I mean to Jeſus Chriſt, who is *the hope of Iſrael*, *and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble*, I tell thee from the Lord, *thou ſhalt ſurely die.* The great fear, when Souls begin to be awakened about their condition, is, Whether they will go to Chriſt *only*; and if they join any thing with him to truſt to, and reſt in, they ſpoil all; you muſt come up to that Scripture, or you are undone, *Phil.* 3. 3. *For we are the circumciſion, which worſhip God in the ſpirit; and rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh.* Remember what a warning Chriſt gave in another caſe, I may fitly allude to it, *Matth.* 24. 4, 5. *Many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and ſhall deceive many.* This is ordinary amongſt Profeſſors to be thus deceived; there comes this and that *Profeſſion*, *Duties*, *common Workings* upon the Soul, and the like, and theſe are apt to ſay, Why, *I am Chriſt*: Now, 'tis thus and thus with thee; thou wilt do well: and many believe this, and are deceived. And therefore, when you begin to look after a Chriſt, be ſure to look after the

*true*

*true One*; for 'tis *he*, and none but he, that can do the Work: and don't think, that becauſe there be ſo many falſe chriſts, therefore 'tis impoſſible to know the true One; read for that, 1 *Joh.* 5. 20.

*Obj.* But how ſhall I know, that it is the true Chriſt that I truſt to? *Anſ.* I'll only ſay this to it; *The true Chriſt makes a true Chriſtian:* they are not only Chriſtians to men, but Chriſtians to God. Now thou art thus and thus to men, but what art thou to God? Is thy heart ſavingly wrought upon? Haſt thou the Life and Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt within thee? It may be thou art, for thy outward appearance, as the King's Daughter, thy *clothing is of wrought gold*; but art thou *all glorious within?* *Pſal.* 45. 13.

5. This Freedom is in Chriſt *continually*. We may apply that place to him, even for this, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. He hath delivered many already from ſo great a death as the death of the Soul, and now alſo he is *delivering more*: he is upon this Work, of giving Freedom to poor ſinners, and we are confident that *he will yet deliver*; Chriſt won't loſe the power of doing Souls good; fear not, he won't be put out of his Office.

There

There be three things, through which men continue not in their Office, but neither of them will happen to Christ; 1. *Unfitneſs*, that tho they were put into it, yet they are found not to be fit for it; they have not Abilities ſufficient to manage ſuch a Place. But Christ is ſuch an able Redeemer, that he will never be put out for unfitneſs; tho the buſineſs of Souls be very weighty, yet he wants no Ability, *All power is given him in heaven and in earth*, Matth. 28. 18. 2. *Unfaithfulneſs*, that they are not true to their Truſt; but it is not ſo with Christ, *Heb.* 3. 2. He was *faithful to him that appointed him.* So in *chap.* 2. 17. he is ſaid to be a *merciful and faithful high Prieſt*, &c. 3. *Death:* You know when a man in Office dies, then another muſt take his place; but as for Christ, ſee *Heb.* 7. 23, 24, 25. *He continueth ever*, and *he ever liveth*, &c. When God the Father put him into this Office, he ſaid to him, *Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchiſedec.*

Now, to end this Fourth Branch with a little Application.

*Uſe* 1. Doth our Freedom come by Christ? Then this ſhews us what an undone condition we are all in by nature: no

no man can deliver himſelf out of the miſery which he is in by ſin; we cannot get out of that Priſon in which we are *bound*; we cannot knock off our own Chains; till Chriſt comes and ſets us free, we remain in our *houſe of bondage*; we are *blind*, and cannot ſee till he opens our eys; we are *dead*, and cannot live till he quicken us; we are *loſt*, and cannot be found till he comes to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt. I warn you from hence to take heed of that Doctrine of Pride, that tells men in the ſtate of nature, that *they may be ſaved if they will*; that takes the Power out of this Redeemers hands, and puts it into the hands of fallen ſinful Creatures. If ever God intends mercy to us, we ſhall know that our help is in him, and not in our ſelves; and that we muſt be born again, not of our own will, but of the will of God; and that we have no ſuch will of our own, till he doth make us willing, *Joh.* 1. 13. *Phil.* 2. 13. The Devil is a great Enemy to the Free Grace of God; and therefore he doth what he can to exalt Free-will in man, as if he had that within him that is ſufficient to bring him to Heaven. Oh, Beloved! man hath that in his corrupt Nature, that is

ſufficient

ſufficient to bring him to Hell, but nothing that is ſufficient to bring him to Heaven. Why did not the man that was wounded by the Thieves, and left half dead, bind up his own Wounds? Why was he not his own Phyſician, if he could? What need the good *Samaritan* come and ſhew ſo much compaſſion to him, and take ſo much care of him, if he could have helped himſelf? So certainly Chriſt did more than need was, if man of himſelf hath ſuch a power to reſtore himſelf: If this be true, what great hurt had we by the Fall, or what great good do we receive by Chriſt? When he came from the Boſom of his Father to undertake the great Work of our Redemption, might he not even have told the World, Why, I ſee you are not in ſuch a bad condition, but that you can help your ſelves; you can get out if you will: and ſo he might have returned back to Heaven again, and have let all alone; and then, what would have become of all the World?

Labour therefore to be ſenſible of your wretchedneſs and helpleſsneſs in your ſelves, and do not think that you can do any thing without Chriſt, that is truly ſpiritual. The way to be rich, is to ſee that

you

you are poor; and the way to be saved, is to see that you are lost. You know, that as long as one that is diseased, thinks that he hath something at home that will do him good, he won't send for the Physician, but he will be tampering with his own Medicines. And 'tis certainly a sign that a Soul is not awakned to purpose, nor wounded deep enough with its own sinful condition, when it thinks it can heal it self. Oh! if thou wert but sick to the very heart, thou wouldst see thou can'st not be thine own Physician. A mans Destruction is of himself, but his Salvation is not, *Hos.* 13. 9. *Eph.* 2. 8. *For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God.*

*Use* 2. Doth *Freedom come by Christ?* Then Oh, what a Friend is Christ to poor sinners! A man, you know, is counted a Friend, according to the Kindness that he shews us; and if he hath shewed us great kindness, then we count him a great Friend. Now the Kindness of the Lord Jesus hath been very great towards us, in purchasing Freedom for us; and therefore, we must own him as our great Friend. Christ once said to the Disciples, *Ye are my Friends*; but, Oh! what cause had the Disciples to

ſay to Chriſt, Thou art *our* Friend? Oh, Sirs, you that are redeemed by Chriſt, mourn for this, that you can no more look upon Chriſt as your Friend: how hard are ſome of you yet to be perſwaded of this, tho he hath done ſuch great things for you! How apt are you ſtill, by Unbelief, to queſtion whether Chriſt be your Friend. You would wonder, if you ſhould ſee a man that was in great diſtreſs, owing a vaſt Debt, and looking every hour when the Serjeant ſhould come and arreſt him, and hale him away to Priſon; or kept as a Slave by ſome mercileſs Enemy, and utterly unable to redeem himſelf; and ſome tender-hearted rich Perſon comes and pays all this Debt for him, and without any deſert of his, gives in his Ranſom, and ſo releaſes him out of Priſon and Captivity: Why now, to ſee this man, notwithſtanding all this, to be ſtill fearing and queſtioning, whether he that did this for him be his Friend; ſurely you would wonder at him, and be ready to ſay, You are the ſtrangeſt man that ever was! your *Friend!* why, do you make any doubt of that? hath he not ſufficiently ſhewn it? Wherein could he have manifeſted it more, than in what he hath done for you? Have not you

you cauſe to ſay, when you think of Chriſt's redeeming you, as the *Spouſe* ſaith of him, when ſhe was thinking of the Excellencies that were in him, *Cant.* 5. *ult. This is my Beloved, and this is my* Friend, *O daughters of Jeruſalem.* Well now, if Chriſt be your Friend, be you his Friends, *Prov.* 18. 24. *He that hath friends, muſt ſhew himſelf friendly.*

*Quæſt.* Oh! How ſhall I do that to Chriſt?

*Anſ.* I will but only name three things, that you know perfectly uſe to do towards their greateſt and beſt Friends: I would commend them to you, in reference to that great Friend of yours, Jeſus Chriſt. 1. Shew your ſelves friendly to him thus, *Commend him to others.* This is an ordinary thing amongſt us, to ſpeak of one that we are much beholding to, by way of ſingular commendation, ſo as if we can, to bring every one that we ſpeak to, in love with him: So now, commend this Friend of yours wherever you come. Tho Chriſt doth not need your Commendation, yet you don't know what a great deal of uſe he may make of it, for the bringing in of ſuch as are ſtrangers to him. The *Spouſe* is much at this work in the Book of *Canticles.* 2. If you have a ſpe-

cial Friend, you'll do all that you can to pleaſe him. I dare not diſpleaſe ſuch a one, he is my great Friend, you'll ſay: So carry your ſelves pleaſingly to Chriſt now; do what he would have you, and you'll pleaſe him. Let not Chriſt be for any thing, and you be againſt it; nor he be againſt any thing, and you be for it. It would be a ſad thing, if Chriſt ſhould be diſpleaſed by Enemies and Friends too: his Enemies they carry themſelves untowardly and croſsly to him; but oh, don't you that are his Friends do ſo too; this *beſt Friend* hath deſerved your *beſt carriage* towards him, *Joh.* 15. 13, 14. 3. If you have a great and ſpecial Friend, you won't leave him; you'll think you ſhall never have ſuch another, as indeed true Friends are very ſcarce. Thus let it be with you in reſpect of Chriſt: Oh, don't leave him; be not like thoſe Diſciples who *went back and walked no more with him*, Joh. 6. 66. I may apply that in *Prov.* 27. 10. *Thy own friend, and thy fathers friend forſake not.* Why Chriſt is a Friend to *thee*, and he was a Friend to thy *father*; forſake him not. If thou turneſt a backſlider from Chriſt, there will be two great Evils in it among others; 1. To be ſure thou

thou wilt never meet with ſuch a Friend again. 2. Thou goeſt the way to make this great Friend thy *great Enemy.*

*Uſe* 3. Doth Freedom come by Chriſt? Then *they, and they only who are in Chriſt, are ſafe.* 'Tis the having of this Freedom (and that is by being in him) that puts Souls out of danger; and all that are without it, are in harms-way; they ſtand where the Storm will fall. There is an excellent place, to illuſtrate this, *Exod.* 9. 18. *Behold, to morrow about this time, I will cauſe it to rain a very grievous hail, ſuch as hath not been in Egypt ſince the foundation thereof even until now.* You ſee what a Storm was a coming here: Well now, read *verſe* 19. and that will tell you who would be ſaved from it, and who would be deſtroyed by it: *Send therefore now, and gather thy cattel, and all that thou haſt in the field: for upon every man and beaſt which ſhall be found in the field, and ſhall not be brought home, the hail ſhall come down upon them, and they ſhall die.* And accordingly it came to paſs, *ver.* 20, 21-23, 24, 25. That which I allude to here is this, That whoever ſhall not be *brought home*, when this *grievous hail and thunder, and fire of Gods wrath* comes, he *dies* for it. And now, when is a Soul

brought home? Why, when it is brought *to Christ.* Be brought to what you will, you are not brought home, till you are in him: And if you shall be found in him at the last day, this will be your Priviledge, you shall see others drowned, but you will be in the Ark. See it at large in *Psal.* 91. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

## CHAP. V.

*Wherein the Fifth Branch of the Doctrine is handled; namely, That this Freedom which Christ offers, is an excellent Freedom; and in particular, concerning its excellent Names.*

THe last (but not the least) Branch of the Point which I now come to, is, That *this Freedom which Christ offers to Sinners, and gives to Believers, is an excellent Freedom*; according to Christ's words here in the Text, *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free* INDEED: As if he should have said, If I make you free, it shall be a Freedom to purpose, a Free-

dom

dom with a Witneſs; you your ſelves, if you have it, ſhall ſay 'tis ſo, ſhall find it ſo. Beloved, there's not a Soul made free by Chriſt, but is ready, as it were, to ſet its Hand and Seal to this, That 'tis an excellent Freedom that the Lord Jeſus beſtows upon ſuch as believe in him; and to ſay to Chriſt upon this account, as *Laban* did to *Jacob* in another caſe, *I have found by experience that the Lord hath bleſſed me for thy ſake*, Gen. 30. 27. I will preſently proceed to the opening of the *Excellency* of it; only I would tell you two things, by way of Preface to it.

1. There is more in this Freedom than I am able to make known to you. I ſhall endeavour to do ſomething towards it, and the Lord help me in it: but you muſt not expect that I ſhould ſet it forth as it is. I confeſs mine own inability to handle this Subject as it deſerves: If you had ſome others to ſpeak to you about it, they would lead you further into it than I can: but whoever ſhould ſpeak to you about it, no Tongue of Man is able to unfold it in ſuch a manner as to ſay, Now I have told you all, and there is no more in this Freedom than you have heard of it. Beloved, this Freedom by Chriſt is one of

the *deep things of God*; we cannot fathom it, 'tis ſo deep; we cannot reach it, 'tis ſo high; we cannot meaſure it, 'tis ſo broad and ſo large. If we could but ſee it as it is, it would be with us as it was with the Queen of *Sheba*, of whom you read, that when ſhe came and ſaw the Glory of *Solomon*, ſhe was ſo raviſhed with it, that *there was no more ſpirit in her*, 1 Kings 10. 4, 5. And tho ſhe confeſſed, that the report that ſhe had heard of it before was true; yet ſhe ſaw that in it when ſhe beheld it, that *the half was not told her*, ver. 6, 7. And therefore, if it were no more but this that I ſhould ſay about this Freedom by Chriſt, That it is ſuch a kind of thing, that all the Miniſters of the Goſpel in the World are not ſufficient to ſet it forth: Why, you might conclude even from thence, Then certainly 'tis a very *excellent Freedom*. For, Oh, what abundance doth the Lord help his Miniſters to declare about Chriſt and heavenly things! And yet, that not one, not any, not all of them, with all their Gifts, with all their Graces, with all their Study, with all their Prayers, are able to open this Freedom as it is; Why truly then, you may even ſay with aſtoniſhment concerning it, as they did when the Lord had

had ſo ſtrangly turned the captivity of *Zion*, *Pſal.* 126. 2. The Lord hath done *great things* for his people; there is ſome *great*, ſome *excellent* thing in it without doubt.

2. I would tell you this alſo before I go any further, That when we have done what we can through Gods aſſiſtance, to ſet out the excellency of this Freedom; and when you have heard, it may be, ſuch things about it, as may even cauſe you to ſay, Well, now we have had this Subject opened to us, we cannot but acknowledg that this Freedom by Chriſt, hath abundance of worth in it: oh, what a precious thing it is! Yet ſtill that which muſt make it excellent indeed in the eye and eſteem of *your* Souls, is *your having an intereſt in it.* Beloved, a man may ſay of Chriſt, and of the things of Chriſt, they are *precious*, and yet they may not be precious to *him*; no doubt but many a wicked man hath ſaid, that Chriſt is *precious*, and yet he was not ſo to *him*, becauſe he did not believe in him, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.* Mark, he *is* precious to *you*: this is the difference between an unbeliever and a believer, the one ſays that Chriſt is precious,

ous, but the other *prizes* him. Nothing will make this Freedom ſo precious to you, as your part in it. Our propriety in a thing puts a kind of excellency upon it in our account, tho it be but mean in it ſelf; and the want of that, makes us have but low thoughts of a thing, tho it be never ſo good; one may drop ſome words by way of commending a good thing; but if it be not ones *own*, one hath no prizing thoughts of it. You know if a man hath but an ordinary houſe of his *own*, tho he may ſay of one that is anothers, and ten times better than his, ſuch a one hath a brave ſeat; yet his prizing thoughts run moſt out to his own; he hath an intereſt and propriety in that, but he hath not in the other. So you may in words commend this Freedom, and ſay, what an excellent thing 'tis; but if it ſhould be with you, as *Peter* ſaid to *Simon*, Acts 8. *Thou haſt neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the ſight of God*, it will not be excellent to you. Tho Chriſt cannot be more beautiful then he is, as to himſelf, yet propriety in him will make him look, as to us, ten thouſand times more lovely then otherwiſe, *Cant.* 5. *ult.*

Well

Well, now to proceed to the clearing up of this, that this is an *excellent*, *moſt excellent* Freedom, I ſhall make it out by opening theſe Seven following things.

1. *The excellent Names by which it is called:*
2. *The excellent Perſon by whom it was performed.*
3. *The excellent Price by which it was purchaſed.*
4. *The excellent properties belonging to it.*
5. *The excellent Priviledges which come by it.*
6. *The excellent Uſes that may be made of it.*
7. *The many Wonders that may be obſerved in it.*

And when I have gone through theſe things, I ſhall make Application of this Branch of the Doctrine, and ſo finiſh my whole work upon this Text.

To the 1. This Freedom by Chriſt is an *excellent Freedom*, as we may gather from the *excellent Names* which are given to it in the Scriptures. It was taken for a great honour amongſt the *Romans*, to have more Names than one; and when they

they would reprove one that was of a low condition, that did take more upon him, than became his place, they would tell him that he carried himself as if he had *three names*; for that was a note of excellency among them, to have three names. Now 'tis the excellency of this Freedom by Christ, that it hath more than three, it hath many names, and every one of them will help you to see what an excellent Freedom 'tis.

Sometimes 'tis called *deliverance*, see Joel 2. 32. *In mount Zion and Jerusalem shall be Deliverance.* In this place, this Freedom by Christ is alluded to and prophecied of; and hence Christ himself is called the *Deliverer*, *Rom.* 11. 26. Now what an excellent thing is *deliverance* counted among us. If any body be in trouble, affliction, pain, or danger any way; oh, they would fain have *deliverance.* If a woman be in travel; oh, how she groans for *deliverance*, *Rev.* 12. 2. and when she is *delivered*, oh, how glad she is of it, *John* 16. 21. *Deliverance* is such a thing, if one be in distress, that they who want faith will have it, if it be possible, tho they use unlawful means for it: Yea 'tis such a thing that Gods own people

people many times cannot tell how to wait for it. We are very apt to be impatient till *deliverance* comes. Every body concludes that *deliverance* is an excellent thing. Well now this Freedom is *deliverance*; we ſhall be all *delivered*, if we be made Free by Chriſt. I don't tell you from what yet, I am not come to that; therefore I ſpeak as yet in a general way.

Again, Another name by which this Freedom is called, is *Redemption*, *Rom.* 3. 24. and thoſe that are made Free by Chriſt, are very often in the Scripture ſaid to be *redeemed*. Now the word *Redemption* properly ſignifies the buying back again of things or perſons, that were alienated from the right owner, by being gotten into Bondage. Hence it appears what an excellent thing this Freedom by Chriſt is, in that it is ſet out by this word, 'tis a bringing of out of us Captivity; a bringing of us back to God, who is our right owner; 'tis a fetching of us out of the Houſe of Bondage, an *opening of the priſon*, as 'tis called, *Iſa.* 61. 11. this Freedom by Chriſt is a *Goal-delivery*: You may fitly apply that Scripture to this in *Pſal.* 107. 10. to 17. when the poor wretch is caſt into ſome loathſom Priſon, and there he

he ſits in darkneſs, and 'tis ſuch a darkneſs as is the very *ſhadow of Death*, and he is not only thus, but he is bound too, and that not with Cords, but with Iron; and there his very heart is brought down, all his ſpirits, and courage, and ſtrength, are gone out with the miſery he undergoes. I ſay, when 'tis thus with a poor wretch, oh, what a precious thing would it be to him to have Redemption! how doth his Soul long to be out of that condition! *Iſa.* 51. 14. *The captive exile haſteneth that he may be looſed*, he is in heaſt, that is, it is in his deſires, that he might be redeemed. Why now this Freedom by Chriſt brings *Redemption*, it breaks the yoke of our oppreſſion; by this we come out of the Iron Fornace.

Again; Sometimes this Freedom is called *Salvation*, Tit. 2. 11. *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared*, &c. The *Greek* word ſignifies a *keeping ſafe:* oh, what an excellent thing is that, to be *kept ſafe*, that come what can or will come, never ſuch dreadful ſtorms, never ſuch blackneſs, and darkneſs, and tempeſt, yet to be *ſafe*. *Safety* is ſo highly accounted of, that every body looks after it; for the outward man to be ſafe from poverty,

poverty, and ſafe from infection, and ſafe from falling, and ſafe from fire, and water, *&c.* They take a World of care to be ſafe, if they are afraid of Thieves; oh, how they will watch! and if they do but ſuſpect that any danger is near them, how circumſpect they'l be to prevent it, and all becauſe they deſire to be *ſafe!* and if that people would but look about them thus, and be careful in the matters of their Souls, oh how well would it be! but here generally people fear no dangers, no, tho we cry *Fire, Fire,* to ſinners, and tell them there is a deep Pit of Damnation before them, and they'l certainly fall into it, if they don't take heed; yet here they are inſenſible; only here, where there is the greateſt danger, they fear the leaſt; and tho they will thank any body from their hearts, that will forewarn them of outward dangers, and count them their great friends, and tell them, Well, if had not been for you, at ſuch a time I might have been drowned, or have broke my neck, and have been killed outright; I might have been loſt if I had had a hundred lives; yet they don't care to hear of their inward and eternal dangers; and the more they are told of them, the more ſome diſ-

like

like those that warn them; the ready way to get some mens hatred, is to shew the greatest love to them; what greater love can there be expressed to a sinner by any man, than to give him a friendly warning that he do not lose his Soul by living in sin? and yet for this, some will become enemies, *Joh.* 7. 7.

*Mark This*

Again, Another excellent name by which this Freedom is called, is *Rest*, Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest*, that is, I will set you Free. Now what a precious thing is Rest, this is such a precious thing that Heaven it self is compared to it, *Heb.* 4. 9. To *have no Rest*, you know what a sad condition this is, *Rev.* 14. 11. Oh, what would a man give for *Rest* that cannot sleep, or that is quite tired; how refreshing and comfortable is it, if he can get but a little of it! how thankfully will some speak when they have been without it a great while! oh, they will say, Blessed be God they have got some Rest, what a Mercy is this! yea so 'tis indeed; you that can go to your Beds at Night, and find Rest there, don't forget to be thankful when you awake, 'tis a great mercy: Yea, but then what a great mercy

cy is this Freedom by Christ? what an excellent thing is that which is Rest *indeed?* Oh! take heed, don't forget this *Resting place*, *Jer.* 50. 6. I remember 'twas the Speech of *Naomi* to *Ruth* when she was propounding a good match to her, Ruth 3. 1. *My daughter should I not seek Rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?* And then she directs her how to order her matters, that she might get *Boaz* her Kinsman to be her Husband, *v.* 2. She was a poor Woman, and brought to great wants, and so was fain to go a gleaning, which was next to going a beging; but her Mother in Law, made no doubt that if she could but get such a rich and good Husband as *Boaz* was, that would be a condition of *Rest* for her; and then she would do well: So that when she propounded such a one as *Boaz* to Match with, there were many arguments included in it, to stir her up to look out to get him. One was, that her was a *good man*; he would be a gracious Husband for her: she would not cast her self away by being Married to him, but she would be well bestowed. For this *Boaz* was a man that feared God; his whole carriage in the busines afterwards declares it. Ano-

ther Argument was this, That he was *rich* too: for so he was; he had a great Estate, as you may see in this story; he was so rich, that besides a great deal he had already, he was able to purchase more, *cap.* 4. 9. so that if she had him, she would have a *purchasing Husband*; he was so rich. And then a third Argument, that she uses was this, That he was one that was *near of kin* to her; for in the case that *Ruth* was now, in the next Kinsman had right to Marry her: And then add this to all that she tells her, that she was now in a *restless* condition; 'twas so with her, that she had great need of such an Husband as this was; and if she could but get him, oh there would be Rest, then she would be well, she need take no further care for *her*. I have briefly opened this story thus, because it is of such excellent use to the thing which I have in hand. Oh poor sinners! I may apply all this to you, concerning your matching with Christ. If you would have a good Husband for your Souls, one that is *holy* and full of grace, why this is *he:* If you would have one that hath a *great Estate*, why this is *he*. If you marry with Christ, you'l have a *purchasing* Husband of him. Never was there

there ſuch a purchaſer as this is; this is one that hath purchaſed *Heaven it ſelf* for believers. And then he is your *near Kinſman*; he is become a kin to us, by taking our nature unto him; he hath a Body now in Heaven that is of kin to mankind. And then for *your* parts, you are in a *reſtleſs condition*; ſo full of Miſery, ſo full of Poverty, ſo full of Iniquity, that there is no true *Reſt* to be gotten where you are; but if you do but match with this Husband Chriſt, you will have *Reſt*; it will be well with you; his Freedom is Reſt, that ſame excellent thing *Reſt*: Yea, 'tis a *glorious Reſt*, as 'tis called, *Iſa.* 11. 10. Oh! call upon your Souls now, and ſay, My Soul, *ſhould I not ſeek Reſt for thee, that it may be well with thee?* Oh, that you could be reſtleſs till you have got this *Reſt*! you are ſo in the truth of your condition; but oh that you could be ſo in your ſpirits, and in your deſires, and in your endeavours, and take encouragement to be ſo from what you find here recorded concerning *Ruth*. You ſee when ſhe ſet upon the work of getting this *Boaz* for her Husband, how ſhe proſpered; ſhe went and lay at his feet, *verſ.* 7, 8. of *cap.* 3. and then *verſ.* 9. ſhe prayed him to

pread his Skirt over her, *i. e.* to become an Husband to her; and ſee how this wrought, and how the heart of *Boaz* inclined to her; firſt, he highly commends her for her pitching upon *him*, that ſhe would be ſatisfied with *none but him*, *v.* 10. and then he promiſes her, that he would grant her all her requeſt, *v.* 11. and then in the next, *chap.* he doth ſolemnly Marry her. So the Lord Jeſus is inclinable and willing to Marry you. Go and try if he be not. Lye you at his feet, beg earneſtly that he would ſpread his Skirt over you, ſee if he do not; can you think that he is not willing; when inſtead of your coming to woo Chriſt (as *Ruth* here did *Boaz*), Chriſt comes to woo you? he would fain be your Saviour, be your Husband; he tells you ſo, and all, that when you have him, you may have *Reſt*, and that it may be well with you; which it never will till you have him.

Again, Another Name by which this Freedom by Chriſt is ſet forth, to ſhew the excellency of it, is *Health*, or Healing, Iſa. 53. 5. *With his ſtripes we are healed*; we get *Health* by them, 'tis all one with this Freedom here: And *Pſal.* 67. 2.

2. where this is prayed for, that it might be manifeſted to the World, and that the knowledg of Salvation by Chriſt might be ſpread all over the Earth (as it was to be in the days of the Goſpel); 'tis called *Saving Health*: *That thy way may be known upon earth, thy ſaving health among all nations.* Now you all know what an excellent thing *Health* is; ſome by the enjoying of it, and ſome by the want of it; this is ſuch a mercy that whatever one hath beſides, yet if there be no *Health* with it, all is imbittered, it makes life it ſelf burdenſom, and uncomfortable; and tho ones condition in the World be but poor in other reſpects; yet ſometimes you ſhall hear people ſay, but thanks be to God they have their *Health* tho, and as long as they have that, they may make the better ſhift. *Health*, beloved, is *more then a ſingle mercy*, 'tis a double, treble, yea a tenfold, yea a hundredfold mercy, becauſe it helps us to take the comfort, and taſte the ſweetneſs of all elſe; what is all the World to a man that is very Sick, or near to Death? *Health* is ſuch an excellent thing, that no body can tell what to do without it. 'Tis an uſual expreſſion or cry with perſons that have it not, and are Sick,

and are in pain; oh, what ſhall I do? and you know how they will be enquiring of this Neighbour, and that, which comes to viſit them, whether they can tell what they ſhould take; and they'l ſend to the Phyſician, and he muſt come and ſee them; and tho he preſcribes ſharp or loathſom things, yet they'l take them; they'l Purge, they'l Vomit, they'l Bleed, they'l Sweat, and all to have their *Health again.* Well, now this is the nature of this Freedom by Chriſt, 'tis *Health*; if a man be Sick at his *very heart*, 'twill recover him; if he be never ſo like to dye, I mean by it, if he be never ſo like to be damned, which is the Second and the worſt Death: If he never ſo much faint away in his Spirits, through the Anguiſh, and Terror of a wounded Conſcience; yet this *Freedom* by Chriſt, if he believes in it, will fetch him again; if he hath never ſo many ſores this will bind him up. There are ſome very obſervable things about Chriſts manner of healing, while he was here upon Earth; I would deſire you to take much notice of them, becauſe the thing that we are to gather from it, is what this ſame *healing Freedom* by Chriſt will do.

1. *Ob-*

1. *Obſerve*, That Chriſts manner of healing perſons that were diſeaſed, was *by touching*; he touched them, and they touched him, See *Matth.* 8. 3, 15. There Chriſt touched them; and in *Mark* 6. 56. There you find that they touched Chriſt: now there is much to be learnt by this. If you would have healing by Chriſt, he muſt touch *you* by the *finger of his Spirit*, (for 'tis ſpiritual healing that we are now ſpeaking of; and therefore the touch muſt be ſpiritual now, both in him and you), and you muſt touch *him* by the *finger of Faith*; for you muſt have *Faith* to be healed. See what a Queſtion Chriſt put to the Blind men, Matth. 9. *verſ.* 27. *Two blind men followed him, crying, and ſaying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us:* then v. 28. you have his Queſtion, *Believe ye that I am able to do this?* And their Anſwer, *They ſaid unto him, Yea, Lord.* And what followed upon it, you read afterwards, verſ. 29, 30. *Then touched he their eyes, ſaying, According to your faith be it unto you: And their eyes were opened.* So you have ſuch and ſuch ſpiritual diſeaſes; you have inward blindneſs, and inward deafneſs, and

inward hardneſs; but do you believe that Chriſt can heal you? Doth not unbelief keep off the cure in you? Do you touch him by Faith? Chriſt and you, as I ſaid but now, muſt touch one another, that you may be healed: He by his Spirit, and you by your Faith. Beloved, this finger of the Spirit is ſuch a thing, that by it Chriſt can touch you, tho you be upon *Earth*; and on the other ſide, this finger of Fath is ſuch a thing, that by it you can touch Chriſt, tho he be *in Heaven*. If Chriſt doth but ſend his Spirit to you, it will tell you where you are; it will find you out, and it will give you ſuch *a touch* as you'l never forget; and when Chriſt hath thus touched you, he will help you to touch him, he will work Faith in you by his Spirit. Oh! look after theſe touches, and don't think you are healed if Chriſt hath not touched you, and you have not touched him.

2. Obſerve, that as they muſt *touch* him that would be healed; ſo they were healed if they did *but touch* him, *Matth.* 9. 20, 21. Here is a great deal of comfort for weak believers. Many a poor Soul is ready to think, that becauſe they have not Faith in that ſtrength and growth, and full

full aſſurance that ſome have, therefore, alas! they ſhall get nothing from Chriſt; do no good at all with that poor, ſorry, ſtaggering Faith of theirs. Truly, poor Soul, I wiſh thy Faith were ſtronger; but I tell thee, if thou haſt but a grain of true Faith, tho it be never ſo weak, if it be but true, 'twill bring thee a cure; for 'twill *touch* Chriſt, if it be true, tho never ſo ſmall.

3. Obſerve, that *as many* as touched him, were healed, *Mark* 6. laſt words of the *chapt.* He did not turn away one that did it; he accepted of the weakeſt Faith; there is not one that comes to Chriſt ſhall be refuſed.

4. Obſerve, that they who touched him, were not *almoſt* healed by him, but they were healed *perfectly*, *Matth.* 14. 36. You that are the people of God, you have yet a great many weakneſſes, and imperfections; you can't ſay yet, I am well, my heart is clean enough. No, I know 'tis your grief that you are no better: Yea, but go on to touch Chriſt ſtill, keep the finger of Faith upon him, and you ſhall find by that time he hath done, that you ſhall be made perfectly whole; he hath begun

gun to cure you already, and he will finish what he hath begun.

5. Observe, how quickly Christ healed them, *Luke* 13. 13. *immediately*, which shews what a speedy Alteration the Lord Jesus can make in your condition. 'Tis, it may be, very sad with thy Soul now; but how soon, if he please, can he bring you to a better pass? If he speak but a word, 'twill be done; therefore wait with patience for a recovery and a reviving in thy Soul; think of this, it may be done *immediately* for ought I know: Why then should I be out of hope?

6. Observe again, That Christ healed them of *whatsoever* Diseases they had, *Matth.* 4. 23, 24. 'tis that which lies many times very heavy upon the Souls of some: What such a sinner as I be received! I find mercy! one in my condition! why my case is an extraordinary case for Sin and Guilt, and Misery. But mind here, he healed *all manner* of Sicknesses; as if the *Evangelist* should have said, he healed *all manner of sinners* that come to him, for that is the spiritual meaning of it, see *Matth.* 12. 31.

7. Observe, that he healed those who could not be healed of *any other*, *Luke* 8. 43. the

43. the poor Womans caſe was deſperate as to any other Phyſician, ſhe *could not* be healed. Very like the words may be delivered in the ſame language that her Phyſicians had ſpoken to her; they might tell her when they had tried all means, Now you *cannot* be healed, and yet Chriſt healed her. Beloved, a ſinner may be given up for *Deſperate*; and a Soul may give up its caſe for *Deſperate*, and yet healing may come from Chriſt for all that. And therefore take heed both to others, tho they be very wicked, and as to your ſelves too, tho your condition be very ſinful, and very ſad, that you do not caſt away all hope, tho it looks never ſo much like a condition that *cannot* be healed; take heed, don't undervalue Chriſts skill: when thou ſayeſt *this* ſinner *cannot* be turned, this condition *cannot* be got out of, thou forgetteſt how thou undervalueſt Chriſts skill.

8. Obſerve again, You find that when Chriſt had healed them, they had an *inward perceiving* of it, See *Mark* 5. 29, 33. ſhe *felt* in her, ſhe *knew* what was done in her. Oh! how ignorant are many of this, who profeſs that they have come to Chriſt, and have touched him, and ſome of them I believe have done ſo: Ah! but how

how many be there, even of Gods own Children, that have not that feeling, that knowledg of it, as to ſay, Sure enough I have been healed by Chriſt, otherwiſe it could not be thus and thus with me, as it is, bleſſed be God; I feel the healings of Chriſt within me. I know there is ſome feeling, ſome ſenſe of it in thoſe who are healed; and therefore examine, you that think you are in this healed condition; What do you feel? What Knowledg have you of any ſuch thing done in you? I obſerve in mine own experience, that when it comes to this cloſe queſtion, If a Miniſter of Chriſt ask ſome, who are too ready to look upon themſelves as converted when they are not; Well, pray what have you inwardly found or felt of ſuch a change? They have nothing to ſay.

9. Again obſerve, what a running, and ſtriving, and crowding there was by them, to come to this healer, See *Mark* 3. 9, 10. and *chap.* 6. 54, 55, 56. Oh! that we could ſee this forwardneſs and diligence in people, to get ſpiritual healing from Chriſt! Oh Friends, did they do thus for their bodies, and will you not do it for your Souls? Chriſt ſuffered it to be thus when he was upon Earth, that they that came

came for healing, ſhould *throng* in upon him, to teach us how earneſtly we ſhould make out to him for our precious Souls.

10. One thing more obſerve, That Jeſus Chriſt would certainly have us to look after this healing by him in a ſpecial manner on the *Lords dayes*, and while we are gathered in religious Aſſemblies; for you ſhall find how he went into their Synagogues, and healed on the Sabbath-days, See *Luke* 13. 10, *&c. Mark* 1. 21, *&c.* Beloved, I beſeech you mind this well, for I bring it to you, that you may be very careful to improve your Lords days opportunities of meeting together in Gods Worſhip and Ordinances, that you may get healing from Chriſt on theſe days. Beloved, theſe are ſuch kind of days as you read of Luke 5. 17. Wherein *the power of the Lord is preſent to heal* perſons. Oh! that *this* day in this Aſſembly you may have healing from Chriſt.

6. Another excellent name by which this Freedom is called, is *Light*, *Iſa.* 9. 2. *The people that walked in darkneſs, have ſeen a great Light: they that dwell in the land of the ſhadow of death, upon them hath*

*hath the light ſhined.* This Scripture is a Prophecy, that Freedom by Chriſt ſhould be made known unto us blind and ignorant Gentiles; and the Apoſtle tells them there in 1 *Pet.* 2: 9. who were now partakers of this Freedom, that God had called them out of darkneſs into his *marvellous* Light. What a *marvellous* Light this is, we ſhall ſpeak ſome thing to it, when we come to ſhew the many wonders that are to be obſerved in this Freedom; but for the preſent let us conſider a little the name it ſelf. *Light*, what an excellent thing is that! Eccl: 11. 7. *Truly the Light is ſweet.* The excellency of Light will appear by comparing it with it's contrary, and by conſidering it in it ſelf: what's the contrary to Light? Why *Darkneſs.* Now you know that this is a thing in which there is neither Beauty, nor Order, nor Safety, nor Comfort; 'twas one of *Egypts* Plagues, and the laſt but one of all the Plagues they had; which ſhews what a dreadful thing 'tis; the ſaddeſt Afflictions outward or inward are compared to *Darkneſs*: The Devil is called the Prince of *Darkneſs*; Hell it ſelf is called the place of *Darkneſs.* And then if you conſider Light as it is in it ſelf, why 'tis one of the deſirableſt things that

that is in the World. You have not a houſe but they will have Windows in it to let in *Light*; this was the firſt thing which God made; and as ſoon as he had made it, he commended it, Gen. 1. 3, 4. *God ſaw the Light that it was good.* God himſelf is ſaid to *dwell in Light*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. Heaven it ſelf is compared to *Light*, *Col.* 1. 12. 'tis called *the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* Now this Freedom by Chriſt is *Light*, and therefore ſure 'tis an excellent Freedom. To make out this, let us conſider a little what Light does, and you ſhall ſee that this Freedom by Chriſt doth the ſame things in a ſpiritual may.

1. Light is an *awakening* thing; you know tho perſons be never ſo faſt aſleep in the dark, yet when the Light breaks in, that awakens them, it makes them think 'its time to riſe; they ſtart out of their Beds when the Light compaſſes them about, they'l ask what a clock 'tis, and they are afraid they have lien a bed to long. Beloved, ſpiritually thus 'tis with this Freedom by Chriſt, when it gets into a Soul, it may be called Light: For oh! how it awakens the Soul! it calls it up to work for Eternity, it makes the Soul aſhamed

to

to think how long it hath been a-bed in carnal ſecurity; 'tis a rowzing thing when it takes hold on the heart; it ſpeaks to a man, according to that in Prov. 6. 9. *How long wilt thou ſleep, O ſluggard? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?* Or according to that which the Ship-maſter ſaid to *Jonah*, when there was a mighty Tempeſt in that Sea, and *Jonah* was gone down into the ſides of the Ship, and he lay and was *faſt aſleeep*, Jon. 1. 6. *What meaneſt thou, O ſleeper? ariſe, call upon thy God*, &c. This Freedom by Chriſt ſhews them that have it, that they muſt be no ſleepers; mind two Scriptures, 1 Theſ. 5. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Ye are all children of light, — Therefore let us not ſleep as do others*, &c. And mark in the 9th verſ. what a Reaſon he gives for this, *For God hath not appointed us to wrath: but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* As if he ſhould ſay, why Freedom by Chriſt is come, therefore no ſleeping for us now. See alſo Rom. 13. 11, 12. *And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of ſleep: for now is our ſalvation nearer then when we believed. The night is far ſpent, the day is at hand: let us therefore caſt off the works of darkneſs, and let us put on the armour of light.*

*light.* Mark how he brings it in *knowing the time.* As if he ſhould ſay, Do you know what a time this is? that 'tis a time of Freedom by Chriſt, and therefore 'tis not only *time*, but *high time* to awake out of ſleep, *&c.* This is the Reaſon, why thoſe that are in the darkneſs of an unconverted condition, ſleep as they do, becauſe the *Light* of this *Freedom* hath not broken in upon them.

2. Light is a *diſcovering* thing, it brings things into view that were hid before; you know when you are in a dark Room, it may be there be many things there, yea perhaps things that are very precious, and that would wonderfully affect one with the Beauty and Luſter of them; but to one that is in the dark, 'tis as if there were no ſuch things; but when Light comes, that diſcovers them. So when a Soul comes into this ſtate of Freedom, then, and not till then, the Beauty and Glory of heavenly things appears. You have an excellent place for this, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4, 5, 6. Ah *Sirs!* there's a Goſpel among you, a glorious Goſpel, as 'tis called, 1 *Tim.* 1. 11. There's a Chriſt preached to you, a precious Chriſt; but as long as any of you are in the Bondage of Sin, you know

not what they mean; you never ſaw any thing in them, to raiſe your hearts towards them, to beſtow your beſt affections upon them; alas, can the Children of Night and of Darkneſs ſee any Beauty in Chriſt, tho he be never ſo beautiful; or any need of Chriſt tho he be never ſo needful? If I ſhould reckon up ſpiritual things one after another, I might ſhew you how the Scripture ſaith, That they who are in this Bondage do not know ſo much as one of them; why, the *Scriptures*, alas! they do not know them, *Matth.* 22. 29. No, tho they can read them, they don't know them; tho they can talk of them, they don't know them. Again, the *ways of God*, alas, they don't know them neither, *Heb.* 3. 10. Again, the *Spirit* that dwells in the Saints, they don't know him, *Joh.* 14. 17. Again, *God* that made them, why they know him not, *Joh.* 17. 25. Again, the *Children* of God, they don't know theſe neither, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1. But there is not one that is brought into this Freedom, but hath ſome ſpiritual diſcerning of heavenly things; Unto them *'tis given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God.*

3. Light,

3. Light is a preſerving thing, it keeps a man from manifold dangers which they who are in darkneſs are expoſed to, *Joh.* 11. 9, 10. Darkneſs is full of dangers; there be many Pits, and Snares, and Stumbling-blocks in the way, which may be ruſht upon before one is aware, from which the Light will ſecure one. So this Freedom by Chriſt is a great defence againſt Soul-miſchiefs; they that are in this State are ſaid to be *preſerved* in Jeſus Chriſt, *Jude* 1. and to have *eſcaped* the corruption that is in the World through Luſt, 2 *Pet.* 1.4. They are inabled to ſee through this Light; there is ſuch a Sin and ſuch a Sin that many have been overthrown by, and therefore I will take heed of it; they do in ſome meaſure ſee the Temptations and the Occaſions to ſin, that others do not take notice of: Being entred into this Freedom, they are poſſeſſed with a holy fear of offending God, and with a godly Jealouſly over their hearts and ways; and tho 'tis true they have a fall now and then, yet it is not ſo dangerous; they don't bruiſe and batter their Souls, and their Conſciences as others do. Hence you have thoſe gracious Promiſes which are made to ſuch as cloſe with Chriſt, of being

kept from evil ways, See *Prov.* 2. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. & 3. 23. & 4. 12.

4. Light is an *adorning* thing, it casts a Beauty and Brightness upon things when it shines upon them. So this Freedom by Christ: Oh, how it adorns them that have it; it adorns them so, that it makes them all *new* Creatures, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. There is a beauty in the eyes of men, and there is a beauty in the eyes of God: Now there be many that are beautiful in the eyes of men, and yet God sees no beauty in them, for he is not taken with the outward appearance of things, as we are; but now beloved, God himself sees a beauty in all those persons that are made Free by Christ, this is a thing that doth adorn us in his eye: And therefore when Christ looks upon his redeemed Spouse, observe how he speaks to her, Cant. 4. 7. *Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee: Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chaine of thy neck.* And *chap.* 6. 5. the former words of it, and *chap.* 7. 6. 'Tis the Glory of this Freedom, that as it makes Christ excellent *to us*, so it makes us excellent *to Christ*: we see a preciousness in *him* above all

all others; and he ſees a preciouſneſs *in us* above all others too; we cannot but love him, we are ſo taken with *him*; and he cannot but love us, he is ſo taken *with us.*

5. Light is a *rejoycing* thing; as darkneſs breeds ſadneſs, ſo Light begets cheerfulneſs, *Prov.* 15. 30. 'tis a thing that raiſes up the ſpirits. So this Freedom by Chriſt is Light upon that account; it brings joy to the heart where it comes. No ſooner was the Jaylor entred into this, but 'tis ſaid he *rejoyced*, *Acts* 16. 34. 'tis ſuch a condition that one would even wonder that any that are in it ſhould ever be *ſorry*; and that any that are out of it ſhould ever be *merry*: And ordinarily there be but two Reaſons why any that are in this condition do not rejoyce, pray mark them. Either,

1. Becauſe, they *fear they are not in this condition*; for one may be in it, and not know it with ſuch aſſurance and certainty as to put him out of fear: Now fear is a great hindrance to joy and comfort. You ſhall obſerve many times that's the great thing that caſts down many a poor Soul, whoſe condition we look upon as

very comfortable in it ſelf: Oh! they cannot ſay but ſuch and ſuch things have been done in them, that they ſpeak ſome hope; but when they conſider what a rare work a right work is, and how deceitful the heart is, and how far they may go, and yet be an hypocrite: Oh! then how they fear whither yet a ſaving change hath paſſed upon them; they would rejoyce, yea, and ſing aloud, and ſhout for joy, if they did but know upon ſure grounds that they belonged to Chriſt; but alas there's their fear. They that are aſſured they are in Chriſt, they rejoyce, and well they may; but it cannot be expected that they ſhould do ſo that *fear* it. Fear hath torment in it, and ſeeing it is ſuch a tormenting thing, tho a Soul ſhould be in Chriſt, yet till 'tis in ſome good meaſure ſatisfied about it, and perſwaded that 'tis ſo, ſorrow muſt needs be the moſt prevailing thing there. And therefore if you would have the comfort of this condition, you muſt not only *be* in it, but labour to *ſee* that you are in it, and then you would find that this Freedom by Chriſt is a moſt rejoycing thing to your Souls, 'tis your uncertainty that hinders your joy, See *Rom.* 5. 1, 2. *We have peace*, &c. Mark that

that word we *have* it! and what then? why we *rejoyce*, &c.

2. Or, because they *forget* they are in this condition. I mean for the present 'tis out of their minds. When the Saints are under sadness they are under a forgetfulness; and 'twas their forgetting where they are, that was the great cause that brought them to it. As now to make it out thus; It may be a Child of God, and one that knows, for the main, he is a Child of God, and hath such grounds for his perswasion as will undeniably hold good by the word of God; and therefore as to the main he knows that he hath not built his House upon the Sand, but upon the Rock. Yet I say, it may be this Child of God for all this, hath turned again to folly, and is guilty of such and such back-slidings, and he hath not kept up his Communion with God by such a close walking as he ought; and so now his comfort and his joy is gone, and he is now brought to such a pass as *David* was in his Soul, there in *Psal.* 51. by reason of the sins that he had fallen into, and is fain to pray over his Petitions; because now 'tis his own case, *ver.* 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. and I pray what is it that hath brought him to

this ſadneſs? Why truly, becauſe, by ſinning thus he forgat where he was, he did not mind, as he ſhould have done; Why I am a Child of God, and in a ſtate of Grace; and therefore I muſt not return to theſe Sins, I muſt not yield to theſe Temptations, I muſt not grieve the holy Spirit by unbecoming walking; but alas he forgot this, and ſo ran himſelf firſt into ſin, and then into ſadneſs.

And then again, another Child of God it may be, and that hath had good Scripture-Evidences of his being ſo, tho he perhaps hath not ſo gone away from God by the forementioned back-ſlidings; yet, (as it doth indeed ſometimes thus fall out), he hath his time of darkneſs too; and he is ſo ſad, he cannot tell what to do; why what's the great Reaſon now that his ſadneſs is thus upon him? The man, it may be, hath been very careful to keep up his Communion with God, and there's nothing in all the World that he hath been as much afraid of, as of diſpleaſing his loving Father, and yet ſometimes he cannot rejoyce: Well, what is the cauſe of his ſadneſs? Why now he forgets where he is, and whoſe Child he is, and what his Priviledges are, and what

Promi-

Promiſes are made to ſuch a one as he is, and what a Covenant God hath taken him into. If he could but remember himſelf, and ſtir up himſelf to ſet Faith awork upon theſe things, and think, Why is my Countenance ſad, ſince I am the Son of a King? and why do I walk thus dejectedly, ſince the Lord loves me, and hath done ſuch great things for me, and will yet do greater? I ſay, if he could but well remember theſe things, and improve the remembrance of them, would not he rejoyce? Yes that he would to be ſure; but alas, he forgets for the preſent that he is in this comfortable condition, and ſo hath not the comfort of it; but when God helps him to remember, then the man will rejoyce again: See that remarkable place, *Pſal.* 63. 5, 6. *David* was now in a wilderneſs-condition, as the title ſhews, Well ſaies he here, but I ſhall rejoyce and praiſe thee again, *My mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips*; but which way muſt this joy come in: Oh! ſaies he, when I *remember thee upon my bed*, &c. As if he ſhould haveſaid, If I could but get into this *Remembrance*, *think* upon what God is to me, and *think* upon what I am to him; this would do it. So that this ſame Free-

Freedom by Christ 'tis *Light*, 'tis a rejoycing thing in it self; only the Reason why many of Gods people dont't rejoyce in it, is either, because they *fear* they are not in this condition, or they *forget* it.

7. Another name by which this Freedom is called, that sets out the excellency of it, is *Life*. Now I need not much stand upon it, to shew you that *Life* is an excellent thing; what's the great care of people taken up about generally, but how to provide for their Life: Why have they so many earnest thoughts, and why do they put themselves upon such unwearied labours as they do, but to provide for their *Life*? and when they are sick, and fallen into some dangerous disease, what's the great, and the greatest fear that then most have? Oh, that their *Life* will be gone; they prize *Life*; so that when we would set out the doing of a thing with the greatest care, we use to expres it thus, We did it as for our *Lives*; and Life is such a precious thing, that tho one lives in a great deal of pain and misery, yet one is very loath to leave it. And we shew what an high esteem we have of Life, by

by the rejoycing that we have in us, when any of our dear Relations have been dangerously sick, and it hath pleased God that they have recovered again; oh, how glad are we that their *Life* is preserved, that they shall continue longer with us; and then when any one of them are taken away by Death, why the sorrow and grief that follows upon that, and the mourning that we make for deceased Friends, confirms the truth of this, that Life is an excellent thing. Well, now this Freedom by Christ is *Life*, *Joh.* 6. 33. — He giveth *Life* to the World: and chap: 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life*; that is, that you might have Freedom by me. And here I will speak a little about this suitableness of this Name, how suitable it is that this Freedom by Christ should be called *Life*. You know Life puts a quickning principle into them that have it, so doth this Freedom by Christ. Take notice of four things here.

1. It puts Life into our *Souls*. Souls do not live spiritually, and unto God, till they come into this Freedom, *Eph.* 2. 1. they are only such as are interested in

in it, that are paſſed from Death to Life. Now to have a Soul that is dead within one, is a dreadful thing, and dead in the worſt ſenſe of all too; for the Soul to be dead, ſo as that it was never quickned. 'Tis true, Gods Children complain many times how dead *their* hearts are, and what great need they have of quickning; and oh, how much do they pray, that they might not be ſo dead as they are, as you ſhall ſee *David* often doth in *Pſal.* 119. 25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 146, 159. Yea, but here is ſomething to be conſidered, that tho they are dead now, it may be, yet, they have been quickned; 'tis not a deadneſs that is from want of Life, but from want of livelineſs; but the deadneſs of thoſe that are not made Free by Chriſt, is ſuch that ſpeaks they were never quickned, and ſo their Souls are dead in the worſt ſenſe of all, they have no ſpiritual Life in them.

2. This Fredom by Chrſt, it puts Life into *Ordinances.* There be ſome that find the Ordinances of Chriſt *living* things, as *David* ſaies, *Pſal.* 119. 50. that he had found the word to be a living word; But who are they that have this Experience? Why they which are made Free by

by Christ. I tell you, opportunities and means of Grace are other manner of things to them, than they are to others. You that are yet in the Bondage of Sin, you can speak nothing that such an Ordinance was blest to you at such a time, and then another at another time; you cannot say, Oh, the sweet Communion that I had with God upon such a Sabbath, and at such a Sermon: You had such a meeting with Jesus Christ, and there were such incomes from the Lord upon your Spirits, and such drawings out of your hearts towards God, that you would not for the whole World but you had been there; but they that are made Free, there be those amongst them that can say so. I my self heard a good man say once, after Prayer had been made to God by a Minister in the company of some Christians, who were together to that purpose, that he would not for all the World, but he had been there that time. And what do you think made *David* speak that in Psal. 84. 10. *A day in thy courts is better than a thousand:* but because he being one that belonged to Christ, found Life in the Ordinances? Oh! this is that which makes Gods people desire to come to Ordinances

oes, and to bleſs God for them, becauſe they do find Life conveyed to their Souls by them; that's a notable place in 1 Cor. 1. 18. That *the preaching of the Goſpel is the power of God*; to whom? why, *to us that are ſaved*, *i. e.* that are partakers of this Freedom by Chriſt, one of the names of which, as you have heard, is *Salvation.*

3. This Freedom by Chriſt puts Life into our *Communion*; I mean that converſe which we have one with another, when we are in company together. Oh! if we are but made Free by Chriſt, and then come into one anothers ſociety, we are fitted by it for a living Diſcourſe together, for the having of ſome heart-warming conference each with other. If there be two or three, or more of theſe perſons met together, 'tis to be hoped that they wont part one from another without ſome ſpiritual good to one anothers Souls. Their being thus related one to another in the Freedom that Chriſt gives to believers, will ſtir up their hearts to heavenly Communication, to help one another forward in the ways of God. They whoſe Priviledg and State this is, they carry *ſpiritual heat* about them, ſo that when they come into

into the company of others, they'l *glow*; as *Mary* and *Elizabeth*, when they come together, *Luke* 1. they did as it were ſparkle in their gracious Diſcourſe one with another: When they that are in the Bondage of ſin, and ſtrangers to Chriſt, meet together, many times there you ſhall have the Language of Hell in their mouths, corrupt Communication, that diſcovers what they are, for their Speech bewrays them; and others of them, tho they are civilized, yet their talk 'twill be but earthly; oh, how their breath *ſmells of the earth*! If one ſtrive to get them into any diſcourſe that is above the things of this World, oh what dead companions they are! then you put them out of their Element; and if you would not have them ſpeak of things below, then you ſtop their mouths, they muſt ſay nothing: for they ſavour not the things of God. And tho 'tis true that Hypocrites may hold diſcourſe about good things, if they be perſons that have parts and gifts, and brain knowledg; yet, oh, there's no Life in that Communion; they are not in this ſtate of Freedom by Chriſt that ſhould put Life into it, and make them ſpeak of good things from a Princi-

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ple within; but now Christs redeemed ones, they are *living companions*, and Communion with them is sometimes as it were a *corner of Heaven*. If they can but once *get into* gracious discourse together, as that is to often somewhat hard to do, what for want of coming oftner together, and by reason of deadness and backwardness to such a good work as edifying of one another in love when they are together, and for want of making it, (as sometimes they should) the very design and end of their coming together, *to build up one another in their most holy faith*, &c. But I say, if they can but once get *into it*, and especially if they be not only true Christians, but *fervent*: Oh, what comfortable, profitable Communion will there be sometimes between them, that their very hearts will be knit together by it, as it was between *Jonathan* and *David*, when they had had Communion together, *The soul of Jonathan, was knit to the soul of David*, and they loved one another as their own Souls. Now, the having of this living Communion together, is a thing which the Lord sets a very high esteem upon. I speak this to encourage Gods people to be more frequent and forward

ward in it, then many of us are, See Mal. 3. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.* This is a Scripture that one would think ſhould make you even long to be more at this work; for mark what encouragement it carries in it. 1. The Lord *hearkned*, as it were by way of *Attention*; and 2. *Heard* it, as it were by way of *Acceptation*: And then 3. This muſt not only be accepted, but it muſt be *written*. 4. Not in ſome looſe little Paper or Scroll, but in a *Book*. And 5. This Book muſt be called a Book of *Remembrance*, Remembrance muſt be the very name of it. And 6. That it might be remembred, it muſt not be laid away, but be *before him*.

4. This Freedom by Chriſt (we being intereſted in it), puts Life into our *Hopes*. If we have not this, all our Hopes of Mercy and Salvation are but dead Hopes; and you'l have no more benefit by them, then you will have of a man that you had great hopes in that he would be a mighty Friend to you in your diſtreſs, and

you count upon it before your diſtreſs comes upon you, that certainly you ſhall have ſuch a Friend as paſſes of that man; and thus you go on, and when your great diſtreſs comes upon you, then you begin to look out for this Friend, that he may now do for you according to what he put you in hope he would do; and when you have enquired after him, and now have ſuch great need of help, you find the *man is dead.* So if you are not partakers of this Freedom by Chriſt, hope what you will, it will come to nothing; and therefore what the Apoſtle tells the people of God they ſhould not do, I tell you that are not the people of God, that you *ſhould* do it, *Heb.* 10. 35. He ſaith they muſt by no means *caſt away their confidence.* But, oh Sirs, you that are out of Chriſt muſt by all means caſt away *yours*, you muſt throw it out for a caſt-away, and if you don't make that a caſt-away, that will help to caſt away you. What a ſlave to ſin! and yet hope to enjoy the Priviledges and Happineſs of them that are made Free by Chriſt! Away with it; In this Senſe I pray with all my heart that God Almighty would bring you to *final deſperation.* What ſinner! doſt thou think

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to live by a *dead Hope? Obj.* But how do you prove that my *Hope* is a *dead* Hope? *Anſw.* I will tell thee but even in three words. 1. Becauſe the Scripture calls it *no* Hope, *Eph.* 2. 12. As a dead man is as good as no man, ſo a dead Hope is no Hope. 2. Becauſe 'tis not a Hope to which God hath begotten thee, thou haſt given thy ſelf this Hope; but the living Hope is that which God hath given to his people by *begetting of them* to himſelf, by cauſing them to be born again, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. 3. Becauſe it doth not bring forth any purifying fruits; thou keepeſt thy Hope, and keepeſt thy ſins too; thy Hope and Holineſs do not go together; thou canſt allow thy ſelf in ways of wickedneſs, and mindeſt not a being like to God. Whereas 'tis otherwiſe with them that have the living Hope; they *purifie themſelves as he is pure*, 1 Joh. 3. 3.

8. One thing more briefly, about this Freedom by Chriſt, as to another name by which 'tis called, ſerving to ſet out the excellency of it, and that is, 'tis called the *Bleſſing of God.* Now that's a precious things indeed; What's all that we have, if we have not Gods Bleſſing with

it? Why 'tis his Bleſſing that keeps us from his *curſe*; when God intended the greateſt good to *Abraham*, he ſummed it up in this, *I will bleſs thee*, Gen. 12. 2. And ſo when you wiſh the greateſt mercy to others, you pray that *God would bleſs them*; his bleſſing is the comfort of every Calling, of every Relation, of every Condition. Why now this Freedom by Chriſt is *Gods bleſſing*, See Acts 3. ult. *Unto you firſt, God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.* And therefore all that I ſhall ſay upon it, is this, That if you have not this Freedom by Chriſt, you'l never have Gods *bleſſing*, and therefore you'l have Gods *curſe*, that will be your Portion. I grant that in ſome ſenſe you may be ſaid to have his bleſſings, that is, you may have outward mercies; in which reſpect God ſaid he would bleſs *Iſhmael* himſelf, tho he were the Son of the Bondwoman, *Gen.* 17. 20. But he may *bleſs* you thus, and yet you may be *curſed* for ever, and ſo you will be if Chriſt doth not make you Free: And oh Sirs, what a dreadful thing will it be to lye under the curſe of God to eternity!

ternity! Do you think you are ſtrong enough to bear ſuch a load as this is World without end? You may ſee ſome inkling of it now, what a dreadful thing this curſe is, if God doth but let fall a drop of it, upon a great Eſtate, how it moulders; or upon any perſon for his wickedneſs, what a forlorn Creature he becomes, as *Cain*. Why this is a thing that will dry one up to the roots, as the Fig-tree when Chriſt curſed it, immediatly *it whithered away*. But what then will it be in Hell where it ſhall be in its full force! But as for them who are intereſted in this Freedom by Chriſt, I may ſay to them, as in *Pſal.* 115. 15. *You are bleſſed of the Lord which made heaven and earth.*

## CHAP. VI.

*Concerning the Excellency of the person by whom this Freedom was performed.*

TO the Second, The excellency of this Freedom will appear, if we consider the excellent person by whom it was performed. You have already heard that this Freedom comes by Christ, and Christ is an excellent person indeed, he is excellent in his Names, and excellent in his Natures, and excellent in his Offices; his Life, his Death, his Satisfaction, Righteousness, Intercession, are excellent. Beauty, Grace, are in him to perfection; he is so excellent that God and all Saints do set their best love upon him, that all the Riches, Hope and Happiness of believers are laid up in him. So excellent, that he is the chiefest among ten thousand, the Pearl of great price, in comparison of whom all things are counted but loss and dung.

But

But my purpoſe is not here to treat of the excellency of Chriſt at large, (for that would fill up a Volume of it ſelf, there being no Subject of Divinity of a vaſter extent than this is.) But I ſhall confine my thoughts to the conſidering of the excellency of his perſon, a little, as it relates to this Freedom, which we have in hand. He muſt needs be an excellent perſon, in that he performed this Freedom according to theſe twelve following things.

1. In that he did it with ſo much *power*; Pſal. 93. 1. *The Lord is cloathed with ſtrength, wherewith he hath girded himſelf.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt bewrayed no weakneſs in his work from the beginning of it to the end. *Our help was laid,* as God ſaith in the Scripture, *upon one that is mighty*; he had ſuch an heavy burthen upon him, as was enough to have broken the back of a thouſand Worlds, but he ſtood under it; he could, as it were, ſwim in the whole Sea of his Fathers Wrath; one drop of which no meer man could bear without ſinking. What an excellent perſon muſt this needs be, that could grapple with the Divine Indignation, with *red* hot Juſtice, with all the Curſe

of the Law, with the Powers of darkneſs, and not be daunted! Never was there a work ſo full of difficulty as this was; and yet Chriſt had enough to carry him through it; he met with many Enemies, but he overcame every one of them: Oh the ſtrength that he put forth in the work of our redemption! all the Devils in Hell were reſolved and combined, if it had been poſſible, to have worſted him, and to have ſpoiled the whole deſign of our Salvation, that it ſhould never have come to any thing; and there was not any thing wanting, that they could do to hinder it; but this *Lion of the Tribe of Judah* was too ſtrong for the roaring Lion, and all his confederates; he wrought out our Freedom notwithſtanding oppoſition on all hands. And from this conſideration let me mind you, *That good things muſt be ſet about and carried on with courage*; for ſo you ſee Chriſt did what he had to do; difficulty did not diſcourage him. And as this did ſpeak the excellency of Chriſt in his work, ſo it ſpeaks the excellency of a Chriſtian in his work; that's a brave Chriſtian that won't be diſcouraged, that whatever he meets with in the way of Service and Duty, his heart *holds up* ſtill.

You

You are like to Chriſt, when 'tis thus with you: I know that you that are the people of God meet with difficulties, you have this and that which is hard to go through; but remember the Captain of your Salvation would not be daunted; take example from him.

*Obj.* But thou wilt ſay, it may be, But I am not ſo ſtrong as he was; he could come with that Power to his work that I have not.

*Anſw.* As thou haſt not Chriſts ſtrength, ſo neither haſt thou his work. 'Tis true, thou haſt thy work too, but it is not ſuch work as Chriſt in ſome reſpects had to do; thou never wert, nor ever ſhalt be called to ſuch great things as he was; but then mark, that Power of Chriſt by which he did his work, is alſo in him for the enabling of thee which believeſt to do thy work: So was it promiſed to the Apoſtle *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. *And he ſaid unto me, My grace is ſufficient for thee: for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs.* And becauſe of this, you ſee *Paul* would be ſo far from being diſcouraged at difficulties, that he would rather glory and take

take pleasure in them; *Most gladly, therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the Power of Christ may rest upon me.*

2. In that he did it with so much *Faith.* What an excellent person must this needs be, that could go through such a work so believingly as Christ did, and hold forth his Hope and Confidence in God his Father, notwithstanding all the hard things he met with in procuring our Freedom? How apt are we, when we are in distress and under desertion, (tho all our afflictions and sufferings are but a Fleabiting in comparison of what he underwent), to let go our hold of the Promises, as you may see it even in those who were very eminent for Grace, and had had great experience of the former goodness of God to them, *Psal.* 77. 7, 8, 9. 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. But now here is one that had such a Faith, that tho he were in the Red-Sea of his Fathers Wrath, and the deep Waters of his afflictions and sufferings did not do to him, as the Red Sea, that the Children of *Israel* came to, did to them; the waters of that were divided, and became a wall to them on their right hand

hand, and on their left, ſo that they were in the very midſt of them, as upon dry ground; but the waters of Chriſts afflictions were overflowing, overwhelming Waters, ſuch as plunged and drencht him into the deeps; his Soul was *exceeding ſorrowful even unto Death*, his very ſweat was like *blood*; yet, even then he could believe that God was his *Father*, and that he had an unſpeakeble Love to him. And this Faith of his had no mixture of unbelief, or of ſinful doubting, as ours hath; but 'twas a firm and full Faith, whereby he reſolved for ever to truſt perfectly in God, let him do what he would with him and to him. Take two Scriptures for this among others, Iſa. 50. 7. *The Lord will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded: therefore have I ſet my face like a flint; and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed.* Mark what Faith he had; he does not ſay now he is looking upon his ſufferings, (for ſo you are to conceive of him in this place) Oh! what ſhall I do, I ſhall never go through theſe Tribulations, I ſhall never be able to drink off this bitter Cup that is prepared for me; but he believes he ſhall, and that his Father would help him; he did not doubt

of

of it: I *know* it, saies he; and in the confidence of this, he doth as it were harden himself against all the sufferings of one kind and another, that he was to be called to, which is the meaning of that expression, *I have set my face like a flint.* Another Scripture for the acting of his Faith, even in the sight, and under the Sense of the pains of Death, and Hell-torments in his Soul, you have in Psal. 16. 8, 9, 10, 11. *I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad*, &c.

Herein Christ is an Example to us, above all the Examples of other believers. No afflictions were like to Christs afflictions, and yet no Faith like to his Faith; the Tryals of other believers were very great, some of them; as the Tryals of *Abraham* and *David*, and their Faith was of a more than ordinary stature; but without disparagement be it spoken, even the Faith of *Abraham* himself, was but a poor little weak Faith, in comparison of this Faith that Christ had: All those Worthies which you read of there in *Heb.* 11. who *through Faith obtained a good report*;

*report*; they were Giants in respect of us, but they were Babes in respect of Christ. Now I say what an unparalel'd Example is Christ to us then, of trusting in God in the worst condition! It may be you think, I hope I should trust God, if it were not so *exceeding* sad with me as 'tis; alas! you cannot think how sad 'tis with me, nor can I tell how to express my misery. Well, I am sure 'tis not so sad with thee as 'twas with Christ; and yet he trusted in God; the very enemies of Christ could take notice that he did, *Psal.* 22. tho they wickedly reproached him for it. And in deed this is the only sinking thing in affliction, let it be never so great, that we cannot trust God; and to what end hath God made the Promises, but that they should be believed? Usually when you doubt of a Friends helping of you in your straits, 'tis because you had not a *Promise* from him; it may be he put you in some hopes that he would help you, but for all that you doubt whether he will or no; but if you have a Promise from him, and he be a Friend indeed, and one that useth to keep his word, then you conclude upon it, Now I am sure he will help me, he hath promised me faithfully to do it. Thus 'tis now with God, towards you that are his Children; you have

have got a *Promiſe* from him, that he will help you in your diſtreſſes; nay not only *one*, but *many*: Nay, you have got his *Covenant*, and his *Oath* for it. Oh! rely upon him, then, however 'tis or ſhall be with you.

3. In that he did it with ſo much *Wiſdom*, as one that fully knew and underſtood what he went about in this great undertaking. You ſhall find in Scripture, that his Wiſdom is much taken notice of, in reference to the work of our Redemption. He is called *the Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. and in Col. 2. 3. *In whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledg.* Mark, not only *knowledg*, but *Wiſdom and Knowledg*; and that in ſuch abundance, that he hath a *treaſure* of them, yea *Treaſures*, yea and *all* the Treaſures of them. And you ſhall ſee in the *Old Teſtament*, when it was propheſied of him that he ſhould come upon this work of giving Freedom and Salvation to us, how his diſcreet and wiſe carrying on of all things about it, is foretold, ſee *Iſa.* 11. 2, 3. *chap.* 52. 13. He dealt with ſuch Wiſdom, that he could tell how to deal with God for men, and with men for God; and to diſcharge the three great Offices of a Prophet, Prieſt, and

and King, with admirable understanding; and how to undermine and infatuate all the Policies of the Devil and the World, and to render their deepest designs against his Kingdom and Gospel void, and of none effect, see 1 *Cor.* 2. 19, 20. and how to carry himself so wisely, even amongst his worst Enemies, that they could have no just occasion to speak evil of him, tho they watched all that possibly could be to get advantages against him, both for his Actions, and Speeches, and Doctrine; and therefore what an excellent person must this needs be? And in this Wisdom Christ doth all things still that are yet to be done; he governs the World in Wisdom, and as the great and good Shepherd, he feeds his Flock with Knowledg and Understanding; as a Pastor that is after Gods own heart; and one great thing amongst the rest that he is made of God to his people, is *Wisdom*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. to instruct them, and teach them by his Spirit how to behave themselves as the Children of God, and to make them to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to be to them a Counsellor, according to that name which is given him, *Isa.* 9. 6. And if his Disciples are called at any time to

bear

bear a Testimony for him before the great ones of the World, he hath promised *to give them a mouth, and wisdom, which all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist*, Luke 21. 15. And therefore Gods people should learn to carry themselves wisely in all their ways and walking, and take heed of doing things rashly and indiscreetly, as those that have Wisdom for their pattern, see Eph. 5. 15, 17. *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.* And the Wisdom that you must do all things with, is not a carnal, politick craftiness; but the Wisdom which is from above; it must be the Scripture-wisdom and *spiritual* Understanding.

4. In that he did it with so much *Love*, Rev. 1. 5. *He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood*, Gal. 2. 20. He *loved me, and gave himself for me*; and in Tit. 3. 4. when the Apostle would briefly sum up the whole work of Christ in giving this Freedom to us, he expresses it in these words, The *kindness and love* of God our Saviour towards man appeared. While he suffered, he was *in love* with those for whom he

he ſuffered; when he died, he was *in love* with thoſe for whom he died; he did not barely do the work it ſelf, but he did it with ſuch affection to poor ſinners, as who ſhould ſay, he would have them ſee and know that they could not have a greater Friend then he was; he bare them upon his heart, while he bare their ſins upon the Croſs: If he had not been an *excellent perſon*, the dreadful pains and ſufferings that our iniquities had put him to, would have made him for ever to loath us, and not to have endured the ſight of any man more; but his *Love* to us was neither removed nor abated for any thing that he endured for our ſakes; neither was his Love *to his Father* in the leaſt diminiſhed by all the grief which he put him to, tho he bruiſed him, and took, as the Scripture ſaith, a kind of *pleaſure* and delight in the doing of it, *Iſa.* 53. 10. Juſtice, as it were, requiring at this time that he ſhould afflict him willingly, which he doth not uſe to do, to the Children of Men; yet under all this, Chriſt kept up in perfect Love to God: And this you may obſerve from his manner of ſpeaking to God, when he was juſt ſtepping into his great ſuffering, when his Soul was exceeding

ſorrowful, even unto Death, *Matth.* 26. 28. Yet mark *v.* 39. and 42. in what a loving way he ſpeaks to him, *Father*; and oh my *Father, let this Cup paſs away from me.* And oh what an Example is Chriſt in this to believers, to love the Lord and not to queſtion but that the Lord loves them, what ever he lays upon them! The Lord ſees a great proneneſs in us, to think it is not thus when his hand is heavy upon us, in that he hath left ſuch kind of ſayings as theſe upon record in Scripture; *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten,* and *whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth; and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.* We are too ready to meaſure Gods affection to us by proſperity and ſmiles, and when things go as we would have them; but if we would be like to Chriſt, we muſt make account that God can be our Father, tho he beats us, and hides his Face from us.

5. In that he did it with ſo much *Patience.* Tis not to be thought what Chriſt ſuffered in obtaining this Freeeom for us, from God, from Men, from Devils by their Temptations; yet under all, his Spirit was in a compoſed ſtill frame; he had no an

an hard thought of God for the low condition which he had caſt him into; he had not an unbecoming, repining, diſcontented word dropping from his mouth, Iſa. 53. 7. *He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth.* God might do what he would to him, and put as much Gall, and Wormwood, and Wrath into his Cup as he pleaſed, and he would take it off: You may remember 'twas one of his patient Speeches, *The Cup which my Father giveth me to drink, ſhall I not drink it?* And men, they might ſay and do what they would againſt him, they might mock and revile, and ſcourge, and crucifie him, and he could take all with an inward peaceableneſs; he could meet that Traitor *Judas* when he was come to betray him, and even then he could call him *Friend*, *Matth.* 26. 50. *Job*, you know, is worthily counted an excellent perſon for his Patience under Afflictions, and ſo he is pointed out to us, in *Jam.* 5. *Ye have heard of the Patience of Job*, and yet in Chriſt there are two things to be conſidered, which are far beyond what

was in *Job.* 1. Christs Afflictions did out of measure exceed what *Job* was exercised with; take all the Sufferings of the Saints in their Bodies and Souls too, and put them into one Scale, and put the Sufferings of Christ into the other, these will outweigh them as much as a Mountain will outweigh a Mole-hill; the greatest Suffering-Saints in the Scriptures, such as *David, &c.* were but Types of Christ in his Sufferings; and so they had but the shadow of sorrow in respect of him, whose sorrows were so great, and of such a nature, that he is said to be a *man of sorrows*, which is as much as to say, he was made up as it were of nothing else. 2. *Jobs* great Patience was mixed with great Impatience; tho he held out in his Tryals to Admiration for a great while, yet afterwards he had his fits of distempered passion; and he that before had blessed God, tho he had stript him naked, at last *opened his mouth and cursed his day.* But Christ held on in Patience, and held out in Patience; he did not at all stain or blemish the state of his Humiliation with a spot of discontent in him; indeed that was done which the Apostle *James* exhorts us to, *Patience had its perfect work*; when his Suffer-

Sufferings were at the full, his Patience was at the full too; and therefore what an excellent Person is Christ! and what an excellent Pattern for us! In 1 Pet. 2. 21. the Apostle there tell us, that *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.* Have we then afflictions upon us in any kind? and doth it seem good to the Lord to exercise us with troubles without or within, or both? Oh, but let us pray that we may be *Patient*; however, that we may not resist the Holy Will of God, by unwillingness to suffer. And I pray consider this, That tho in some respects Christ had that to quiet and compose his Spirits to Patience in his Sufferings, which we have not; yet in other respects we have something to be thought upon for the quieting of our Spirits in our Sufferings, which Christ had not. There are two things which Christ had to quiet him that we have not; as,

1. That no suffering of any kind came upon him, but what he *foresaw*: this is a great means to keep persons patient, to foresee such or such an Affliction; if they be surprized with some great Calamity on a sudden, and had no inkling of it before, but it breaks in upon them like the Sea,

pnexpectedly, then many times there is much impatience mingled with that condition, tho it ſhould not be ſo; but now Jeſus Chriſt knew of his troubles particularly before they came, which we do not; we cannot tell what will befall us between this and Death; what Affliction will meet us ſuch a time, in ſuch a place; as *Paul*, *Acts* 20. 22. Not knowing *the things that ſhall befall me*: he had a *general* notion about it, as *verſ.* 23. but particularly he knew not what would befall him; but it was not ſo with Chriſt. See a place where he ſpeaks of *his* going up to *Hieruſalem*, (as *Paul* doth here) and you ſhall find that Chriſt knew what would befall *him*, Matth. 20. 17, 18, 19. *Behold, we go up to Jeruſalem, and the Son of man ſhall be betrayed unto the chief prieſts, and unto the Scribes, and they ſhall condemn him to death: And ſhall deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock, and to ſcourge, and to crucifie him: and the third day he ſhall riſe again.* Mark how particularly Chriſt foreſaw things; and no doubt but this was one help to Chriſts Patience, he knew it would be thus.

2. That he had not ſo much as a principle of Impatience *within him*; there was no

no tendency in *his ſpirit* that way; for that's true in this caſe, which he ſaid of himſelf, Joh. 14. 30. *The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.* But now, the Lord knows 'tis not ſo with us, we have corrupt natures that are breeding of diſcontent, and impatience, and very apt upon all occaſions to be breaking out; and we have much to do, the beſt of us; nay, 'tis more than the beſt of us can do without the Grace of God aſſiſting us, to bear any Affliction patiently, we have ſuch ſeeds of ſin within us.

But, as I ſaid, in ſome reſpects we have that to think of, to quiet us in our Sufferings which Chriſt had not; as,

1. That our Afflictions are *but ſmall*; Chriſt could not ſay ſo of his, he could not call them light Afflictions, as *Paul* doth his, and ſuch as befall the people of God. No they were great, exceeding great, both for number and for nature: and what ſhall not we be patient under *ſmall* Afflictions?

2. That whatever we ſuffer, we have *deſerved it*; this ſhould quiet us. Do we ſuffer? why, have we not ſinned? *Lam.* 3. 39. Yea, but Chriſt ſuffered, and *others*

*deserved* it; he did not come to the Cross as the Thieves did that were crucified with him: Mark what the good Thief saies, Luk. 23. 40, 41. —*We receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss.*

3. That whatever we suffer, if we be the people of God, we don't suffer with *a curse*; we are afflicted, but we are not cursed; should not this quiet us? But there was *a curse* upon Christ while he suffered; *He was made a curse for us*, Gal. 3. 13.

6. The excellency of this person will further appear, if we consider with what admirable *Humility* he did all in this work. Never was there one so high in some respects, and yet so low in others. If he would have stood upon't, we must needs confess that he had so much worth, and greatness, and goodness in him, that the best upon Earth were not worthy to wait upon him, or to be in his company. See what *John* the Baptist, and the good Centurion, speak in this thing, —*Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear*, says the first, Matth. 3. 11. *I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof*, says the other, chap.

chap. 8. 8. Nay, all the *Angels* of God are commanded to *fall down before him*, Heb. 1. 6. And yet, oh! how did he abaſe himſelf, tho he were the Son of God, tho he was the *head of all principalities and power*, tho he *had in all things the prehe-minence*; he was too good in ſome ſenſe to appear in ſuch a ſinful World as this is; and if he ſhould have appeared according to his excellency, his Majeſty would have been too bright for the eyes of man to behold him; but when he came to be our Redeemer, he laid his Glory aſide, or rather veiled it under a mean and baſe outward appearance; and he was content for a while to be as it were a Pearl of great price lying upon a Dunghil. I pray will you hearken a little to a few things wherein his great Humility was manifeſted, while he carried on this Freedom of ours; and afterwards I will tell you what you are to do with this famous Example of Chriſts.

1. He humbled himſelf in becoming *a Man*; you'l quickly ſee what great humiliation here was, if you conſider what he was before: why before he was Man, he was God: (but take heed, do not think that he did ceaſe

ceaſe to be God when he became Man, but he took the humane Nature to the Divine, and ſo both Natures, tho they were, and are, and ſhall be for ever diſtinguiſhed, were united together in one Perſon.) Hence 'tis ſaid, that *God was manifeſted in the fleſh*; and *the word was made fleſh and dwelt among us.* Now what an abaſement was here! Men and Angels may and will to all eternity admire it, that God ſhould come into the World in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh! Beloved, if you ſhould ſee a King upon the Throne eſpouſe a beggar, would you not ſay 'twere an Act of great Humiliation in him? why thus the Lord Jeſus humbled himſelf, and much more, in becoming man; for he was the greateſt King that ever was, and our Nature was the verieſt Beggar that ever was. If you would look upon it a little under the conſideration of a Woman, the better to conceive of things; what a wife was here like to be for Chriſt? As pitiful a Creature as ever eye beheld, Poor, Naked, Loathſom, Wicked, Curſed; 'twas a Nature that looked *like the Devil.* I pray don't miſtake again; Chriſt did not take the deviliſhneſs of our nature; he kept Free from all

all the corruptions and pollutions of it; but he came as near to it as poſſible could be without ſin. I know not for my life how to expreſs it better to you than thus, I pray Mark it: He took the *Humanity* of our nature, but not the *Iniquity*; the Iniquity of it was *imputed* to him, but it was *not united* to him; it was laid *upon him*, but it was not *in him*; for he was *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners*, Heb. 7. 26. Now that the Divine nature, and our poor beggarly, loſt, undone nature ſhould thus meet together in the Perſon of Chriſt, that he ſhould take this to himſelf for an everlaſting companion: Oh! beloved, 'twas an high Advancement for us, but 'twas an unſpeakable Abaſement in Chriſt. If he ſhould have took the nature of *Angels*, it would have been a wonderful Humiliation in him; but that he ſhould take the nature of *man*, of *ſinful man*; that he ſhould come down from the Throne of his Glory, and embrace, and eſpouſe ſuch a beggar as this was, what an excellent perſon muſt Chriſt needs be for Humility? You ſhall find in *Heb.* 2. That this is brought in as a great Evidence of his Humility, (of which he is ſpeaking before, that he ſhould

ſhould be one with us, and make us his brethren, and not be aſhamed to call us ſo, *ver.* 11.

2. In that he did not onely humble himſelf ſo low as to *become a Man*, but that he would be of the *loweſt rank* of men in the World, Phil. 2. 7. *He made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him-ſelf the form of a ſervant.* As he went up and down among men, they that knew not who he was, would have thought he had been ſome poor Servant, he had ſuch a baſe outward appearance; ſo that he took away all occaſion for any bodies ask-ing ſuch queſtions as theſe: When they looked upon him, *What gallant Gentleman is that, that goes there? What do you think that brave Suit coſt that he wears?* No, I warrant you ſome asked queſtions that were rather contrary to theſe, *What poor ſorry man that was?* &c. He was not only a Servant to God, for that's an honourable thing; but he was a *Servant to men*, Luke 22. 27. *I am among you as he that ſerveth*; he did the greateſt Service for men that ever was, he delivered them out of the greateſt danger, he ſerved them ſo as to *ſuffer* for them; that's ſuch a notable piece of Service that no man is able to do one

one for another. If there could be such a thing as that when any of you are to undergo great pains, another should come and bear them for you; or when you are to dye, another should come and dye for you, and so you should not dye at all; or if the Wrath of God were ready to fall upon your Souls, another should come and let all fall upon himself; what notable Service would this Person do you! Now such a Servant to men was Christ; if they believe in him, he excuses them from their eternal pains, and eternal Death, and from Gods eternal Wrath, by suffering it for them. And what a Servant to men did he shew himself in reference to their very Bodies, that he laboured like any Servant in doing good to them that way, in healing the Sick, in opening the Eyes of the Blind, in casting out Devils! *He went about every where, doing good, and healing all manner of diseases among the people*; yea, he stooped to the meanest Offices, Joh. 13. 4, &c. he washed the Disciples feet, which was such a humility in him, that *Peter* told him flat and plain, *he should never do it for him*; and no doubt but he wondered that any of the other Disciples would offer to let him

him do it to them. Christ was fain to bring him off from his peremptoriness with a rowzing word, *If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me*, verſ. 8. (Tho Christ had a ſpiritual meaning in it): or elſe he would never have yielded to it, he looked upon it as a thing ſo far below Christ; but rather than have *no part with him*, at laſt he did not only ſuffer it, but deſire it.

3. He ſhewed his humility in his *ſubmitting himſelf to the Ordinances.* Christ had no need of them, we muſt wait upon them, becauſe we have ſuch need of them, as much need of them as our Bodies have of Phyſick when they are Sick, and of Food when they are Hungry; but Christ he had no ſin in him, nor no grace imperfect, and yet he would come to the Ordinances; he was *Circumciſed* at eight days; and then when the *New-Teſtament* Ordinance of *Baptiſm* was ſet on foot by his forerunner *John the Baptiſt*, he came and would be *Baptized* himſelf, tho *John* wondered at his humility in it. See *Matth.* 3. 13, 14, 15. and ſo he went into *Synagogues*, as his manner was on the Sabbath-day, *Luk.* 4. 16.

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4. In *having no poſſeſſions in the World*, I may ſay concerning Chriſt, in this caſe, as 'tis ſaid God dealt with *Abraham* about the Land of *Canaan*, Acts 7. 5. *God gave him no inheritance in it, no not ſo much as to ſet his foot on, yet he promiſed that he would give it to him for a poſſeſſion.* So you ſhall ſee God hath promiſed to Chriſt, *Pſal.* 2. 8. that he ſhould have all the World; and yet, when he was in it, he had not ſo much of his own, as to ſet his foot on, after the way of mens having poſſeſſions; he would not, to ſhew his humility. Hence you find him telling the Scribe that ſaid, *he would follow him whither ſoever he went*; that the *Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Air have neſts; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*, Matth. 8. 20. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt did that which many are afraid of; they are afraid of *becoming poor*: what! to have nothing, to be brought to nothing! but he *became* poor, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9.

5. In his *aſſociating himſelf with the meaneſt ſort of perſons.* He did not ſeek the acquaintance of the great ones of the World; one of his great acquaintance was *John the Baptiſt*, a man whoſe Raiment was of *Camels* hair, and a Leathern Girdle about his Loins

Loins; and others that he was most intimate with, they were a company of *Fishermen*, and he would eat with *Publicans and Sinners*, and be very familiar with the *poor*.

6. In his *refusing the preferments of the World*, when they were offered to him. Sometimes he had a very fair occasion in his way to make himself great upon Earth; but he would not close with it; he could as willingly lay a Crown at his foot, as others could desire to have it upon their heads, *Joh.* 6. 15. The truth is, he was made a greater King by his Father already, than any upon Earth could make him; he had set him as *King upon his holy hill of Zion*, Psal. 2. 6. he had made him King in his Church, and King of Saints; but this was an Invisible and Spiritual Government; the most neither knew or believed that he had a Kingdom which was not of this World.

7. In his *Subjection to his Parents*, of which you read *Luke* 2. 51. He behaved himself in all dutifulness towards them, going and coming at their lawful commands, with cheerfulness and obedience; he never gave them any just cause to find fault with him for any unbecoming

ing carriage towards them; he was a Child that carried himſelf better towards his Parents, than his Parents did towards him; they were ſinful Parents, but he was an holy Child, filling up his Relation to them in the fear of God. And therefore you young ones, that have Parents, and carry your ſelves croſly, and ſtubbornly, and diſobediently towards them, tho God hath commanded you to *honour your Father and Mother*: Where did you learn to be ſo rebellious? are you too good to be ruled, and ordered by your Parents, when Chriſt thought not himſelf too good to be ſubject to his, and yet one of them was but his Father-in-Law, his *ſuppoſed* Father, as the Scripture calls *Joſeph*? *Luk.* 3. 23. Now, you are ready to think here that you may take more liberty. If it were your own natural Father or Mother, thoſe that you had been begotten and born of, then you'l ſay perhaps you would not be ſo ſtout; but Chriſt carried himſelf as dutiful to him that was but his Father-in-Law, as he did to his own Mother that bare him in her Womb; ſuch was his Humility!

8. In his *tender condescending to the weakest in Grace*, Matth. 12. 20. He had a company of Disciples about him, that were but like *little Children*, in respect of spiritual stature, and so he often calls them; and yet, oh, how sweetly did he condescend to them, by instructing them in their ignorance, and compassionating of them in their weakness, and bearing with them in their Infirmities!

9. In his *not seeking his own commendation* for any of the great things which he did or suffered, Joh. 5. 41. *I receive not honour from men*; he could speak with the greatest Wisdom, and act with the greatest Power, and live with the greatest Holiness, and suffer with the greatest Patience, and yet nothing puffed him up. I cannot enlarge upon these things.

Now that which we are to do with this famous Example of Christ, is to *learn from it to be humble*, Matth. 11. 29. Whatever Mercies, whatever Gifts, whatever Graces, the Lord bestows upon us, whatever use the Lord makes of us in one kind, or other, still to lye low give all the Glory to God, and take none to our selves. It is the great sin of many, that they cannot know a little more than others know, or do

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a little more than others do, or have a little more than others have, but presently they are proud of it; and if no body will commend them, they'l commend themselves. I beseech you watch much against this sin; Jesus Christ hath made it the great mark of an Hypocrite, *Matth.* 6. 5. A true Christian sees so many defects in his best works, that he desires rather to be ashamed of them, than to glory in them.

7. We may consider the Excellency of his Person, (in Relation to this Freedom), in his doing of what he did in it, with so much *desire*. Beloved, this work did not at all look desirably in it self; never was there such a black and dreadful face upon any work that ever was undertaken; and yet upon some accounts Christ *desired* it, and desired it so much, that I doubt not to say, he did rejoyce in his Spirit, to think that he was the Person that was to do it. You know that when there is a motion made, for the carrying on of some great design, that will be of publick and unspeakable benefit, tho indeed it will cost a deal to bring it to pass, and the Person that is engaged in it, whoever he

be, must be at a vast charge before he can finish it; why the very motioning of such a thing raises our desire, and we are full of good wishes towards it, and all people generally will long, Oh, that it might be carryed on! and they'l say 'tis a World of pitties that such a noble design should not be put forward; but suppose that the carrying on of it, should be cast by Authority upon any of our particular persons; that the King should single out such a man, whom he sees to be much taken with the motion, and should say, Well, I pitch upon you to be engaged in this business; truly, then our desire towards the thing would be much damped, if it be our selves that must do it; and now we it may be, can rather desire that the business should be quite laid aside, than that it should be carried on by us; that 'tis we that must bear the burthen of it, and we that must be at the charge; how chill and cold will our affections grow to a work then, tho it be never so useful! but Jesus Christ desired that this great and costly work of our Redemption should go on, tho the lot fell upon himself to do it: You have divers expressions in Scripture that signifie thus much; I will quote Four amongst many.

many. One is in *Iſa.* 53. 11. where what he did in this work, is called the *Travel of his Soul*; which, as I think, I have formerly hinted, I look upon as not only ſetting out the greatneſs of his Sufferings in it, but alſo the *great deſire* that he had to go through with it. A ſecond is, Luk. 12. 50. *But I have a baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitned till it be accompliſhed!* A third is, Joh. 18. 11. ſpeaking of the bitter Cup of his Sufferings, *ſhall I not drink it?* A fourth is, that in Heb. 10. 9. *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*: The very words ſound, as if Chriſts deſire were upon the work; and if you compare it with *Pſal.* 40. 7, 8. from whence this is quoted, you ſhall ſee that there is no leſs a word put in there, than *delight*, which muſt needs carry deſire along with it; *I delight to do thy will, O my God.* Now, what an excellent perſon muſt this needs be, that could come to ſuch a hard, painful, coſtly work, under the weight of which all the Angels in Heaven would have ſunk into nothing, with ſo much *deſire*!

8. Which will yet further appear, if we conſider, that he ſhould do it with ſo

much *exactneſs* as he did; there are ſome things that when they are done, we uſe to ſay, *they are done after a faſhion*, meaning, that they are ſorrily done; if another had had it in hand, it would have been another kind of thing. But beloved, this ſame Freedom of ours that Chriſt hath been a performing; oh, 'tis excellently done, moſt admirably done, 'tis the exacteſt, curiouſeſt piece that ever was wrought, 'tis done to the life; Chriſt hath ſhewn himſelf in it, a *workman that needeth not to be aſhamed.* I remember 'tis ſaid in *Exod.* 39. 43. That when they into whoſe hearts God had put wiſdom to deviſe curious works for the Tabernacle, brought all to *Moſes* when they had finiſhed it, *Moſes* looked upon all their work, and beheld that they had done it *as* the Lord commanded; Even *ſo* had they done it, *i. e.* with that exactneſs; and *Moſes* bleſſed them: ſo we have great cauſe to bleſs Chriſt, when we look upon this exact work of his, and to ſay, *he hath done all things well, very well*; there is not the leaſt thing miſſing in it; every way perfect, his work is like himſelf; Chriſt is a *one-ſuch*, and ſo is his work: View it from the beginning to the end, 'tis all over compleat;

pleat; let the Saints look upon it, they'l ſay, the like was never ſeen; let Angels look upon it, and they'l ſay ſo too; let God himſelf look upon it, and he will ſay ſo too, and therefore his work is called the *pleaſure* of the Lord, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *i. e.* 'tis ſo done, as that he is well pleaſed with it. From hence we ſhould learn of Chriſt to be no bunglers in our work. Two things there be that Chriſtians ſhould much aim at: 1. To do *what* they ſhould; that God may not ſet us about ſuch and ſuch work, and we be doing that is contrary; when God bids you ſerve him, take heed, don't go, and inſtead of that, ſin againſt him; don't be about the Devils work, when you ſhould be about the Lords; remember you owe him Service, but you owe the Devil none; 'tis a good queſtion to be often asking your ſelves, Whoſe work am I a doing? 2. To do it *as* they ſhould, here the Lord knows we come miſerably ſhort; ſometimes we can ſee, through grace, that what we are about is good for the *matter*; but oh, then for the *manner* of doing it, how we fail in that! Sirs, where is your exactneſs in duty? You *pray*, but where is your *exactneſs* in prayer? You *ſing*, but where is your *exactneſs*

in singing? You *hear*, but where is your *exactness* in hearing? How much better might every thing be done, than we do it? Eph. 5. 15. *See then that you walk circumspectly.* It may be rendred thus out of the Greek: Look how *exactly* you walk [πῶς ἀκριβῶς]; how you come up to the height and fulness of duty. A man may be about that which he should, and yet may be doing of it by halves; here may be a fault, and there may be a fault; tho you cannot work so fast as you should, yet be careful to do what you do, well. If you cannot write a *fast hand*, yet labour to write a *fair hand*.

9. Christs excellency will appear further in this, That he did it for *so many*; that he could lay down a Ransome that was sufficient to Free so many; why how many, you'l say? that place in Joh. 17. 2. will tell you, *to as many as the Father gave him*; and they be not a few, considered by themselves, tho they are but a small number compared with them that perish, *Heb.* 2. 10. Oh, beloved, there be many that will be the better for Christ to all eternity. Oh, that we may be some of them; that others may not be made rich by him, and we abide poor; that others

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may not have Freedom by him, and we remain in Bondage. What a worthy person must he needs be, that can help, and pardon, and sanctifie, and save more than you or any Arithmetician in the World is able to take the sum of them! *Rev.* 7. You have Gods redeemed people spoken of, and mark, they are look'd upon under a twofold consideration. Fifft, as among the *Jews*, the people of God under the *Old Testament*, and there indeed you have their number brought in *v.*4. *One hundred forty four Thousand*, which you are not to take, as if it were exactly no more; but it is to shew, that in the days of the *Old-Testament* there were not, as indeed it could not be expected, so very many saved, because the people of God were then confined to one Nation: But afterwards in *v.*9. When the Gospel is supposed to spread among the Gentiles; then their number is so great, that it cannot be taken by any man alive. And therefore you that fear God, you shall not want good company in Heaven: upon Earth you may; because, perhaps the Saints may now live at such a distance from you, that you can have but little of their Society. But in Heaven you'l be all together. 'Tis very true; if there

there were none but God there, you would do well enough, he will be all in all; and immediate communion with him, will make up a perfect blessedness, tho you were there with him alone; but you shall have God and Angels too, and God and all the Saints too, the whole Host of the redeemed Ones by Christ, shall meet in one general Assembly, and there you shall see better than now you do, what an excellent Person Christ is, even upon this Account, that he hath made so *many* holy, and so many happy, and that he hath freed poor sinners by thousands, and thousands of thousands.

10. See the excellency of his Person further, In that he did all *alone*; he discharged this great work, and bare this heavy burthen without the help or hand of any Creature in Heaven or Earth, Isa. 63. 3. *I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none to help me*, Heb. 1. 3. he did all by *himself*; the truth is, there was no Creature above or below that could strike one stroak in it; the work was of such a nature, that if the best of them all had but medled in it, they had spoiled it. Angels in Heaven have a great deal of Skill, and Wisdom, and Power, one of those glorious Spirits can do more then

then a whole World of men, but if they had all joyned their skill, and their Power together; their Wisdom would have proved but foolishness, and their Power but weakness in this matter; 'twas a business too great for any but the Son of God to be the Saviour of one Soul; but when he comes to it, his *own* arm brought Salvation. And as for any help from man; surely, if any body were like to lend him any Assistance, it must have been some of the good people that lived in that Generation, when he was in the days of his flesh; but you know what the Scripture saith expressly about that, that when he was in the very heat and brunt of his work, then *all his Disciples forsook him and fled*, Matth. 26. 56. That which I would commend to you from hence, is this, That you would let Christ be all alone still, I mean in the point of your Justification, he was so in the work of your Redemption. Now, as none was joyned with him there, so joyn nothing with him here: Sirs, whom do you look to for your Acceptance with God? Why you'l say to Christ, but is it Christ alone? Have you set him by *himself* in this thing? Some there be that hope for mercy from God, but they do not look to Christ *at all*;

*all*; they have this and that of their own, which they hope will do; such honeſt, and ſuch blameleſs, and ſuch righteous perſons as they are, muſt out of all queſtion, be in a good condition: this will prove a Rock to ſplit you on one ſide, to dream of Salvation without Chriſt, *Gal.* 3. 10. Others there be that look to Chriſt, but not to *Chriſt alone*. Some thing muſt be mingled with him; they'l do ſomething, and Chriſt muſt make up the reſt; this will prove a Rock to ſplit you on the other ſide. I tell you, your Faith will never be counted for righteouſneſs, if you make theſe wretched mixtures in the buſineſs of your Juſtification: 'Tis *to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that juſtifieth the ungodly, that faith is counted for righteouſneſs*, Rom. 4. 5.

11. Again, In that he did it at *once*, Heb. 10. 10. *Once for all*; when he went about it, he did it, and there was an end of it; he did not come into the World twice for it. He is counted a worthy perſon that can accompliſh a buſineſs of great concernment, tho he makes many a journey to the place where he is to do it; but Chriſt made but one journey from Heaven to Earth, about this work, and he finiſhed it; and therefore he gave up

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the Ghoſt, with thoſe words in his mouth, *It is finiſhed*; as if he ſhould ſay, there's nothing left for another time. Learn from hence what great things Chriſt can do in a little while, and wait upon him in the Faith of it. One thing that doth much help to caſt us, and keep us down in our Spirits when we have this and that trouble upon us, is our forgetting how quickly Chriſt can ſpeak to our condition; what a great work was it, when there aroſe ſuch a mighty Tempeſt in the Sea, and the Ship that the Diſciples were in, was covered with Waves, and they were all in danger to ſink preſently, to bring down theſe high Winds, and to lay thoſe hugh Waves! but Chriſt did it in a trice, *Matth.* 8. 24, 25, 26. Poor Chriſtian! haſt thou a great corruption to be ſubdued? haſt thou a ſtrong temptation to be removed? haſt thou a great ſtrait to be delivered out of? Remember Chriſt can do it at once; it may be thou haſt been hacking, and hewing at ſuch a ſin, or temptation, a hundred, and a hundred times, and trying many means, and all wont do: Why but at once Chriſt can do it; look to him better then thou doſt, if he ſtrike but one ſtroak at a luſt, down 'twill come; but one

one ſtroak at a temptation, it is gone.

12. Laſtly, The excellency of his perſon appears in this, That he performed this work of our Freedom, with ſo much *overplus*: According to that Scripture which I have formerly quoted, Rom. 5. 20. *Where ſin abounded, grace did much more abound.* If you ſhould lay our Bondage in one Scale of the Ballance, and this Freedom by Chriſt in the other, this will weigh that down to the ground. This Offering of Chriſts for the Salvation of Sinners that believe in him, may be alluded to, from that in *Exod.* 36. where you read that the Children of *Iſrael* offered ſo much towards the Service of the Tabernacle, that there was fain to be a Proclamation throughout the Camp, that there was brought in more than enough, and they ſhould now hold their hands, *verſ.* 5, 6, 7. But beloved, Chriſt hath brought in ſuch abundance for our Redemption, that if ever there were need of a Proclamation to ſtop any from doing no more in a good work, 'twas in this caſe; 'tis true that our ſins, and wants, and miſeries, were very great; but this remedy for them, is above them, beyond all expreſſion. I had almoſt ſaid, if it be poſſible for a Soul to be *overſaved*, Chriſt hath

hath done it. It muſt needs have been a great comfort to believers, when they had thought of this Freedom by Chriſt, if they could but have ſaid this of it, Well, bleſſed be God, there is *enough*; tho there be nothing over, yet there is nothing wanting; we have not a ſin but he can pardon, we have not a want but he can ſupply; he hath as *much* as we can need. Oh! but there is much more comfort than ſo, much more cauſe of rejoycing for them; for they may ſay, that 'tis not poſſible for them to take in what he is able to give out. When the prodigal thought of his Fathers houſe, ſaith he, (Luke 15. 17.) *There's bread enough and to ſpare*: So when you think of Chriſt, you may ſay, There's Freedom *enough*, and to ſpare. And oh, that God would help you poor ſinners, in the thinking of this, to reflect upon your ſelves, as the Prodigal did upon himſelf, when he ſpake thoſe words, that there was in his Fathers houſe *bread enough*, *and to ſpare*; and *I periſh* with hunger, ſaith he; as if he ſhould ſay, Why then, what do I do here in my undone famiſhed condition? Why don't I go thither? Wretch that I am! is not that a better place for me, than this is? He had, through mercy, ſuch a

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ſenſe of his preſent condition, that he could not endure to be in it any longer. *I will ariſe and go to my Father*, &c. *verſ.* 18. and when he came to him, there he found enough, and to ſpare indeed; there was *compaſſion* in the Fathers heart, and *running* towards him when he ſaw him, and falling *upon his neck* and *kiſſing* of him; and calling for the beſt Robe, and for the Ring, and the Shooes, and for the fatted Calf to be killed. So Sirs, if you would come to Chriſt once, you would come to one that hath enough, and to ſpare; there wants but one thing, which indeed was that which brought the Prodigal home, and the Lord work it in you: And that is, he was grown *ſo hungry*, that he thought verily he ſhould have periſhed. Oh, that it were but come to this with you, that are yet afar off, that you had ſuch a kind of hunger after Chriſt; and I would make no doubt but you alſo would quickly ſay, *I will ariſe and go to him.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

*Concerning the excellent price with which this Freedom was purchased.*

THE Third thing for the making out the excellency of this Freedom, is the consideration of the *excellent Price* with which it was purchased. Now that which I shall speak upon this, shall be to open two things.

1. *That this Freedom was purchased*: And,
2. *That it was purchased with an excellent price.*

1. This Freedom is a *purchased* Freedom. Persons that are in Bondage, cannot come to be Free, but it must be by one of these ways, Either their Freedom must be given them, or it must be bought; and if it cannot be bought by themselves, then it must be by another for them. Now the truth is, we come to have our

Freedom by Christ, both these ways; By Gift in respect of us, but by Purchase in respect of Christ: Or to express it a little otherwise; It is given to us upon the account or consideration that it was purchased by Christ for us, and so it must be purchased by Christ, that it might be given to us, See Rom. 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* Mark, it comes to us *freely* and *by grace*, that is, as a meer Gift, which we could neither buy nor deserve; but yet 'tis *through the Redemption that is in Christ*, that is, he purchased it for us: and therefore *Eph.* 1. 14. all the company that do truly belong to Christ, are called the *purchased Possession*; for so the best Expositors do understand these words, as not meant of *Heaven*, or blessed Immortality, but of the *Church of Christ*; not of the place of Glory, to which they shall come; but of the people that shall come to the place; they are a *purchased Possession*; so particularly *Calvin* upon the place. And so 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. when the Apostle is stirring of them up to glorify God in their body, and in their spirit, he makes use of this Argument, That they were *bought with a Price*;

*Price*; and this is the meaning of all those places of Scripture, in which believers are called *Servants* of God, and *Servants* of Christ; particularly, see that place *Joh.* 12. 26. When you meet with this word (as you may often), you must understand of what kind of Servants this is meant; and for this you must know, that there were (among other divisions that might be made of them) two sorts of Servants: Either *hired* Servants, that agreed to dwell with such a Master for such Wages, and for such a time, and then were gone again, and and at their own dispose: Others there were, that were *bought* Servants, bought with money, as *Abraham* had many of them in his house. Now these kind of Servants were much more under the power, and at the pleasure of their Masters, than those who were but hired; they might use a far greater Soveraignty over them. Now I say, when you read that believers are called the Servants of Christ, you must understand it in this latter Sense, that they are his *bought* Servants (for Christ doth not care for hirelings), and so he hath a full and absolute right to them, as a man hath to any thing which he hath bought with his money. Now here

I would a little Anſwer to three Queſtions, about this purchaſed Freedom, which may profitably be raiſed.

Queſt. 1. *How can this Freedom be ſaid to be purchaſed?* For it may be many of us cannot tell how to conceive that there ſhould be ſuch kind of things done here, as uſe to be in the making of a purchaſe. The Anſwer may be twofold.

1. Beloved, whatever darkneſs there is in our underſtanding of things, yet to be ſure the language of the Scripture is very proper and ſuitable; and the fault is not in the Scriptures expreſſion, but in our conception, that's weak, and ſhort, and dull. *Nicodemus* could not conceive aright of what Chriſt ſaid about being born again; he was ready to think that Chriſt did ſpeak nonſenſe, *how can theſe things be?* ſaith he; and yet Chriſt ſpake moſt properly and ſuitably; and 'twas *Nicodemus* was the fool in the things of God. So now this is the Scripture Expreſſion, that this Freedom is the *purchaſe* of Chriſt, whether we can underſtand it or no. And how many other things doth the Scripture ſpeak of, which it may be we can underſtand

ſtand no more than we do this, and yet are very clear in themſelves, tho not to us? I'll only ſay this, The leſs we can underſtand the things of God, the more cauſe we have to be humbled for our Ignorance, and to cry to God, ſo to teach us, that we may be in the number of thoſe to whom 'tis given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God. But,

2. Yet why may we not very fitly, and ſomewhat more eaſily conceive of this Freedom under the notion of a *purchaſe*; if we ſhould but ſpeak of it according to the cuſtom that is amongſt men? How doth it uſe to be amongſt men in the matter of purchaſe? conſider that; and you ſhall find there was the like here, tho in a more glorious manner. Now for this, I will turn you to one Scripture, where you ſhall read there was a purchaſe made, and then ſee how things will agree. The place is in *Jer.* 32. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. In this purchaſe there are divers things.

1. There was ſomething to be purchaſed, i. e. *the Field that was in Anothoth, in the countrey of Benjamin.* 2. The perſon ſelling it, and that was *Hanameel, Jeremiahs Uncles Son.* 3. The perſon buy-

ing it, was *Jeremiah: And I bought the Field*, &c. 4. Here was these two persons being together and treating about this business, v. 8. *Hanameel mine Uncles Son came to me,— and said unto me, buy my Field*, &c. 5. Here's a sufficient solid Reason, why *Jeremiah* should be the man that should buy it; *for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine*, i.e. because he was the next Kinsman. 6. Here is the Price at which it was to be sold, and that was *seventeen shekels of silver*, and this was paid down, he *weighed* him the money, *v.* 9. 7. Here was the writing drawn, or the Evidence, or Conveyance for this, and *Jeremiah* Subscribes and Seals to it. And then 8. There were Witnesses to it, *v.* 10. and so he takes it to himself and disposes of it as he pleases, it being now his own. Now if we should go over these things again, and see how it was in the business we have in hand, certainly we may well say, that this was a *purchase*; for here was something also to be *purchased*, and that was *Freedom* for poor sinners that were in Bondage; then here is the *Person* that was to *sell* this, and that is *God* the Father; then here's the *Person buying* this Freedom, and that

is

is Christ the Son: then here's these two *Persons* being together and *treating* about this business; so they did in Heaven: then the like Reason holds why Christ should be he that should buy this Freedom for us, he was (to be) our near Kinsman, and so the right of Inheritance would be his. And then for the *Price* at which it was to be sold, which was paid down by Christ in full weight; we shall come to that in its place. And then for the *Conveyance* or Evidence for this, one of which in *Jeremiah*'s case was sealed, and the other open (as the manner then was among the *Jews*, to have two writings, one sealed up, that they kept to themselves; and the other open, that any body might read it); why there was the Covenant between God and Christ alone; that's the *sealed* Evidence; and then there was to be the Book of the Scriptures, wherein this Covenant of Grace is unfolded; this is the *open* Evidence that all may look into: And then Christ subscribed, as it were, and sealed to this Covenant or Conveyance, by giving his full consent to all that was in it, and binding himself by Promise to his Father, to perform what he undertook in it. And then as for *Witnesses*,

the truth is, there was no creature by when this was done; for 'twas done before the World began: But, beloved, they were Witneſſes to one another; and as we uſe to ſay, *God is more than a Thouſand Witneſſes.* And 'tis enough to tell you, that the faithfulneſs of theſe perſons is ſuch, that their agreement together muſt needs ſtand; See *Tit.* 1. 2. So I have done with that *1ſt Queſtion.*

Queſt. 2. *But why did it not pleaſe God, that this Freedom ſhould be given to us, and there an end? Why muſt it firſt be purchaſed by Chriſt? Why did God carry it thus here by poor ſinners in bondage, they ſhall be ſet free, if you will pay the price?*

*Anſw.* Two things to this: 1. In thoſe things which God doth, it were a ſufficient Reaſon (if we knew none other) to ſay, that God would have it ſo. So was his will and pleaſure: And if no other Reaſon could be given, we were to reſt ſatisfied, and ro be ſilenced with this, as the higheſt Reaſon of all. This Reaſon you ſhall find is given for things that are above our reach; as namely, why ſome ſhould be elected, and others paſt by, *Eph.* 1. 5.

1. 5. and why the great things of God and the Goſpel ſhould be revealed to poor ſimple creatures, and hid ſtom the wiſe and prudent, *Matth.* 11. 25, 26. and why ſuch and ſuch ſhould be ſaved, and others left in their damnable condition, *Rom.* 9. 18. Now beloved, if we had nothing elſe to ſay, to be ſure we may ſay this, It was the will of God, that Chriſt ſhould purchaſe this Freedom; that you have expreſly in *Joh.* 10. 17, 18. And therefore Chriſt knowing that it was the will of his Father; to be ſure, being ſuch an obedient Son as he was, he would do it: He would by no means have his will to lye croſs to his Fathers will. But,

2. There is another great Reaſon for it; and we have more to ſay in this caſe than ſo; and that is this, That God was ſo to carry on this buſineſs of our Freedom, as not only to have reſpect to our Good, but alſo and chiefly to his own Glory. While he was to ſee the one ſecured, he muſt ſee that the other did not ſuffer. Now you muſt know, that God could not have *all his* Glory, but in this way. There were Two great Attributes amongſt all the reſt, which God did intend to glorifie, and that is his Mercy and his Juſtice. His Mercy would

would have been pleased well enough, if sinners had been set free without the purchasing of their Freedom. But then his Justice would have been offended still: How should that have been quieted and satisfied? Therefore this must be so done, as that *mercy and truth might meet together, and that righteousness and peace might kiss one another.* Justice would have made a loud cry, that Heaven would have rung of it again, if all should have been swallowed up in mercy, and in giving away all, without any consideration had to it. For Law and Justice could say, We have a curse against these sinners; and they are as legally condemned, as ever were any Traitors: And therefore pray let us be heard; for they shall not, nor cannot go free, if the Debt be not paid. And therefore if they be not able to redeem themselves, where's the Surety that must do it for them, that we may come upon him for all? This now makes it necessary that Christ must *purchase* this Freedom, *Acts* 17. 3.—He *must needs* have suffered. Why *needs?* Because here was Justice to be glorified as well as Mercy.

Quest. 3.

Quest. 3. *But if we are thus purchased by Christ*, may believers say, *Then it may seem that God the Father, hath quitted his interest in us (for so 'tis in the manner of purchasing amongst men; he that sells to the purchaser, quits all his right and title to that which is bought), and we are very sorry for that: we would be Christs, but we would be the Fathers too?*

*Ans.* And so you are for all this; See *John* 17. and compare *ver.* 6. and 10. together. In *ver.* 6. saith Christ, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me*: This looks now, as if the Father had quitted all his interest in them. But 'tis not so; for in *ver.* 10. *and all mine are thine.* Still they are *thine*, and thine are mine too, saith he: As if he should say, We have a mutual interest in them; their being mine, doth not hinder them from being thine, as well as their being thine doth not hinder them from being mine. God had an interest in you upon the account of Creation, and that he keeps still; and which is more, upon the account of Election, or of everlasting love to you, and that he keeps still: and Christ he hath a right to you upon the account of Redemption: And tho that doth

doth enter you into a new relation to him, yet it doth not break off your former relation to God the Father. He loves you, and delights in you as much as ever he did; and your happineſs by Chriſts buying of you, is no way diminiſhed, but increaſed. For both have an intereſt in you, and both love you, *John* 14. 21.

Now for the *Second* thing, *That this Freedom was purchaſed with an excellent price.* Here I ſhall do Two things: 1. I ſhall labour to make the truth of this appear to you, That 'twas an excellent, moſt excellent price that Chriſt paid fot it. 2. I ſhall draw ſome profitable Conſiderations from it.

*Firſt*, For the truth of it: Beloved! Jeſus Chriſt *paid well* for this Freedom. God did not deal with Chriſt in this caſe, as you read *Ephron* the *Hittite* would have dealt with *Abraham*, if he would have let him, when he would purchaſe his Field, and the Cave that was in it, for a Burying-place, *Gen.* 23. he would have given it him, *ver.* 11. He tells him indeed the Land was ſo much worth, Four hundred Shekels of Silver, if it ſhould be ſold to the full value of it; *but*, ſaith he, *what is that betwixt*

*me*

*me and thee? bury therefore thy dead, ver.* 15. And thus he would even have forced it upon him for nothing: But *Abraham* notwithſtanding he ſtood upon it, that if he had it, he would lay down as much money as it was worth, *ver.* 9. and ſo he did in *ver.* 16. Nor did the Father ſay to Chriſt, as *Ornan* the *Jebuſite* did to *David*, when he would purchaſe the place of his Threſhing-floor, that he might there build an Altar to the Lord, that the Plague might be ſtayed: *Take it to thee, ſays he, I give thee all*, 1 Chron. 21. 22, 23. tho *David* would not accept of it. So *ver.* 24. *Nay, verily I will buy it for the full price.* So he did, *ver.* 25. But God ſtood upon his price, his full price with Jeſus Chriſt. He held him up, without any abatement of what this Freedom was worth. He paid to the worth of it. 'Tis true, 'tis a worthy precious Freedom; but yet I may ſafely ſay, Chriſt gave enough and enough for it. Oh the price that he paid for it! He did not buy of his Father as we may buy of *him*, *without price*, *Iſa.* 55. 1. but he came, as I may ſay, to a *dear Market*, when he came to make his purchaſe.

*Qu.* Well

Queſt. *Well, then you will ſay, pray what was the Price which Chriſt paid for this Freedom?*

*Anſ.* Here I ſhall ſpeak that which may make you wonder, and that is this: Truly beloved, he did not pay *one farthing* for it; there did not go a *penny* out of his Purſe. Now it may be that which will be next in you thoughts, will be this; truly then 'twas even cheap enough of conſcience; here's a *Price indeed*, we expected that you would have named ſome vaſt ſum of Silver and Gold, that would have been ſo great as to have beggar'd any man in the World to give it. No, I have not one ſuch word to ſpeak to you; but this I have to ſpeak to you about it, that Chriſt had been as good to have brought a company of *Pebbleſtones* to his Father for this Freedom, as all the Gold and Silver in the World, and one would have done as much as the other; but he and his Son muſt drive another manner of trade than this, to make poor ſinners Free; there muſt be another gheſs Price; Why what was it? Oh that which was infinitely beyond all the treaſures of this World. If *theſe* would have ſerved, Chriſt by his power could have rained them down from Heaven for a thouſand

thouſand years together. But beloved, there muſt be (as I may ſo expreſs it) another rain; it muſt *rain Blood*, and Blood from the *ſide and heart* of Jeſus Chriſt, *i.e.* he muſt come down from Heaven, and ſhed his Blood to make a Ranſome for us, ſee Acts 20. 28. *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood*; there's the *Price* that he paid. Now mark a little, while I ſhew you in a few things, that this was a *Price indeed*, an excellent Price. The Blood of Chriſt to be ſure is precious, as you find it called in 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. For this weigh but theſe four things well, and you'l ſay 'tis *precious Blood.*

1. This Blood of Chriſt is the *great Seal of the Covenant of Grace*; 'tis called the *Blood of the everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. Now in the Covenant of Grace, God promiſed a *World of mercies*, yea, no leſs than an *eternal World of mercies* to his people; and the ſum of this Covenant is this, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*: But this he branches out into many exceeding great and precious Promiſes, wherein he ſaies he will do thus and thus, and all that is needful for his people. Take all the Promiſes of the

the Gospel together, and there you have the whole Covenant of Grace unfolded and explained; and oh, what a glorious Covenant 'tis! how much doth, even *one* of the Promises of this Covenant carry in it! so that we may say, Blessed, and for ever blessed are all they, who are partakers of them, that are the heirs of all those great things that are contained in them; they have Portion enough that have part in the Promises. But beloved, all this Covenant, and all the Promises of it, would be as nothing, were it not for this Blood of Christ, by which God Seals all to believers; 'tis true, indeed, that the Sacraments of the *New Testament*, are now the Signs and Seals of this Covenant of Grace; but these are but Seals of a second nature, outwardly and Visibly; but that which is represented, and signified by the Water in *Baptism*, and by the Wine in the *Lords Supper*, is the *Blood* of Christ; this is the first and great Seal. And therefore 'tis said, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. that all the Promises of God *in him are yea, and in him Amen.* You know when there is a Covenant or Conveyance made, a man makes great account of the Conveyance; but why? Because it hath the

the Seal to it, for 'tis that which makes it to be all of force; if the Seal were gone, what were all elſe worth? Now when Jeſus Chriſt came to redeem his people, he was fain, as I may ſo expreſs it, to *pawn his great Seal* for us; that which ratifies and confirms all that ever God hath ſaid he will do for them that fear him.

2. You will ſee the excellency of this Blood of Chriſt in this too, That no Service or Duty that ever was performed ſince the fall of man, or ſhall be to the end of the World, ever was, or ever will be accepted at the hands of God, but upon the account of this Blood. I ſay, ſince the *fall*, becauſe before that, God dealt with *Adam* upon another ſcore; he was to be accepted in the way of perfect obedience to the Law; but ſince that, if ever God did accept of one Service, or one Sacrifice, or of one Duty, it was always, and altogether for the ſake of this Blood: What was the Blood of all the Beaſts that were offered in Sacrifice, tho in never ſo great abundance? as you read there, in 1 *Kings* 8. 63. There were *two and twenty thouſand Oxen, and an hundred and twenty thouſand Sheep*, offered at one time; yet I ſay, what was all this to

God, had it not been for this Blood of Christ? And so what's all that we do, or can do in any Service, if we don't look to this Blood in the Performance of it? and if God doth not look upon us, and our best works in this blood, 'tis but Abomination to him. That's a notable place in Heb. 10. 19, 20, 21, 22. *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*, &c. Ver. 22. *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith*, i. e. let us come and present our Persons, and our Services before the Lord, and that with *boldness*, noting that there is acceptance for us: But how? *by the Blood of Jesus*; without that all would be nothing. Now what a precious thing must this Blood of Christ be, that puts value to all the Services of the Saints throughout the World? And therefore take heed how you go to any Duty, without looking at it; and pray that God would not look upon any Duty of yours, without sprinkling this Blood upon it. And by the way, what a case are you in, that rest in your Duties, and don't look to Christ in them, but think 'tis well enough if you do but take a Bible and read, or down upon your knees

knees and pray, and a hundred such things; but you have no Faith in the Blood of Christ in what you do; you may think you have done some great matter now: and oh, this must needs be accepted; whereas God never did, nor ever will accept of any mans person or work, but upon the account of this Blood. I pray mind that Scripture well, there is much in it to this purpose, Rev. 8. 3, 4. *And another Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer, and there was given unto him much Incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which was before the throne. And the smoke of the Incense which came with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angels hand.* Mark some things. 1. This *Angel* is Christ. 2. His standing at the Altar, is his being, as it were, ready for us, whenever we go to Duty; for on the Altar, under the Law, were the Sacrifices offered. 3. He hath a golden Censer in which there was much Incense, which is his own righteousness. 4. And with *this he* offers their prayers; he perfumes their Duties with his own spiritual Incense. 5. They are not the prayers barely of *men*, but of *Saints*:

Gods own Children, whose prayers are more pure and heavenly then others are, even *their* Duties must have this perfume. 6. Nor of *some* Saints, but *all*. 7. And then that which makes them *ascend* before God, that is, be accepted of him, is because the smoke of *this Incense* went up with them: without that they would never be a sweet savour unto God.

3. This Blood of Christ is such a precious thing, that it makes God *amends for sin*. If we did but know what unspeakable wrong sin doth to God, and what unspeakable dishonour God hath by it, we should even be ready to ask this question, How is it ever possible to make his blessed Majesty the least shadow of amends for it? Beloved, if you wrong or trepass your Neighbour, you can put that to an Arbitration, and make him amends for it; but who is there of you, that can make God a recompence for the sins which you have commited against him; yea, for the least transgression? see *Mic.* 6. 6, 7. All your Tears and Blood can never quench that fire of Gods Wrath which is kindled against it, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. When you have spoken but one idle word, or thought but one vain thought; if you have no more help

to get off the Curſe and Condemnation that is due to it, than Men and Angels can afford you with all their utmoſt ability, you are undone for ever; it makes ſuch a breach between God and you, as the whole Creation cannot make up: But now there is *one* thing, and but *one*, that can make God amends, and full amends for ſin, yea, for *all manner* of ſins, and for never ſo many, and never ſo great ſins, and that is this Blood of Chriſt, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. and 2, 1, 2. Tho thou haſt been never ſo vile, and ungodly; yet if thou can'ſt but get this Blood ſprinkled upon thee, through Faith in it, it will make God himſelf to ſay, *deliver him, for I have found a Ranſom*; this will make amends for thy Swearing, and for thy Drunkenneſs, and for thy Uncleanneſs, and for all the wicked Abominations of thy heart and life: Oh what a precious Blood is this then! And take but one thing more for it, which is,

4. *The dreadful Vengeance* which God doth take upon men, wherever the Guilt of this Blood of Chriſt lies. If he doth but come once to avenge the blood of a *man*, he doth *that* ſeverely; if any one hath committed wilful murder upon his Neigh-

bour, God is reſoved that that man ſhall *be ſurely put to death* for it, Numb. 34. 31. but when he comes to take vengeance for the Blood of his Son, here the Vengeance is dreadful beyond all others: You have divers Inſtances that I might give you of it in Scripture. How terribly did God deal with *Judas* for the betraying of this innocent Blood? he filled him with that horror of conſcience, that he muſt be his own Executioner, *Matth.* 27. 5. and in the *hanging of himſelf, he fell headlong, and burſt aſunder in the midſt, and all his bowels guſhed out*, Acts 1. 18. And after all this, he ſent him to his *own place*, and that was a ſad one, *verſ.* 25. So the people of the *Jews* that brought upon themſelves the Guilt of Chriſts Blood, *Matth.* 27. 25. they have been under the Curſe of God for this, theſe Sixteen hundred years. And ſuch as are *guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, by eating and drinking unworthily in the Sacrament; you ſee what Vengeance God ſaith he will take of them, 1 *Cor.* 11. 27, 29. And if any Profeſſor ſhall prophane this Blood by *ſinning wilfully, after he hath received the knowledg of the truth*; you may ſee what a dreadful doom God denouceth

nounceth against him, in *Heb.* 10. *v.* 26. *There remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment*, &c. to the end of *v.* 31. Well now, beloved, this blood which is the *great seal of the Covenant of Grace*, and without which no service or duty ever was, or ever shall be accepted from the hands of any man, and which is the *blood of Atonement* for all manner of sins; and the guilt of which God will so *dreadfully avenge* wherever it shall be found to lye; I say, this blood was the price wherewith the Lord Jesus Christ purchased this Freedom: And therefore, your selves being Judges, Was it not an excellent price; and hereupon, is not this Freedom an excellent Freedom, since Christ may well say of it, as the chief Captain did to *Paul*, Acts 22.28. *With a great sum attained I this freedom?* Now I will end this with but Two Considerations briefly.

1. Consider from hence this, for your instruction, you that are Believers: Be often thinking, *What shall I do for this Christ that hath done so much for me? Obj.* But it may be you'l say, What, doth Jesus Christ look for a requital? Alas! then we are undone on t'other side. I answer, No: Whatever you do for Christ, you must be

ſure you do nothing upon the account of requiting of him; as who ſhould ſay, you are greatly in his debt, and you'l do what you can to come out of it. 'Tis not a recompence that I call upon you for (you are never able to do that); but the manifeſtation of your gratitude to him, by an obedientiall fruitfulneſs. Do but live as thoſe that are his, and that's all he deſires. Why now, ſhall he that hath paid this great price for you, require any duty at your hands, and will you not do it? or call you to any difficulty for his ſake, and will you ſtick at it? Remember Chriſt obſerves how you walk after ſuch great things as he hath done for you, and don't give him cauſe to ſay to you by your unfaithfulneſs to him, as *Abſalom* ſaid to *Huſhai* concerning *David*, *Is this thy kindneſs to thy friend? Why went-eſt thou not with thy friend?* 2 Sam. 16. 17. Oh! keep with your friend.

2. Conſider this from hence, for your conſolation: This Jeſus Chriſt who hath *bought* you, will never *ſell* you. You know men many times after they have bought a Purchaſe, and made it their own, they ſell it again. Something or other is in it that they do not like, and ſo they'l part with it. But I am ſure, and be you ſure, that Chriſt

Christ will never deal thus with you. *Obj.* But you'l say, We have such great sins, that we fear he will. *Ans.* Yea, but you know, that after a Man hath married a Wife (unless she offend him so by Adultery, as utterly to break the bond of Wedlock, which Christ will never suffer true Believers to do), tho she hath a great many faults, yet he resolves he won't put her away. The Law of the *Land* won't let him; nor, which is more, the Law of his *Love* won't let him. He thinks, when he looks upon her, with all her failings, Ay, but she is *mine*; I have made her *mine* tho. So is it here. See 1 Sam. 12. 20, 22. *And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all all this wickedness, yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart: For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Concerning the excellent properties belonging to this Freedom.*

AND now in the Fourth place, I am to demonstrate, that this is an excellent Freedom, by the excellent *Properties* belonging to it. That you may plainly understand what I mean by these *Properties*, it is as much as this, That I am now to speak that of this Freedom, which is peculiar or proper to it self, and that cannot be said of any other Freedom. Tho you read of other Freedoms in the Scripture (as that of the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and afterwards out of *Babylon*), which indeed were very great and glorious deliverances, yet they will not reach to this. Never was there the like to this. As the Book of *Canticles* is called the *Song of Songs*, for the excellency of it; so I may call this Fredom, the *Freedom of Freedoms*, because there is none to be compared with it. And therefore this may be the

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1ſt *Property*, That you may take of it: That it is an *incomparable* Freedom: It hath not any fellow, nor any match. That which was done in this Freedom, was never done in any before, nor never ſhall be in any for the time to come. What is ſaid there, in *Joel* 1. 2, 3. of a great Judgment which the Lord threatens, I may ſay of this great Redemption; *Hear this, ye old men,—— Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?* &c. And what God ſpeaks to the Children of *Iſrael*, about their Freedom out of *Egypt*, I may well apply to this Freedom, *Deut.* 4. 32. *For ask now of the days that are paſt, which were before thee, ſince the day that God created man upon earth; and ask from the one ſide of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any ſuch thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?* Conſider Three things here, and you will ſee that this is an *incomparable* Freedom.

1. The other *greateſt deliverances that* you read of, which God gave to his people, they *were but the types and ſhadows*, and forerunners *of this* Freedom. Particularly, ſee it in that deliverance out of *Egypt*, you that are acquainted with the ſtory of it, know

know what a great deliverance that was. 'Tis seldom spoken of in the Scripture, but there is a glance upon the greatness, and famousness of it. 'Twas so great, that they were charged never to forget it, *Deut.* 8. 14. And to that end the Lord appointed that they should begin their reckoning of the Months of the Year, with that Month in which this deliverance came, *Exod* 12. 1, 2. And on the 4*th* day of that Month, in the Evening of it, which was the very day on which the Lord brought them out of their Bondage, they were to keep the *Passover* every year throughout their Generations, for a Memorial of it, *ver.* 6. 14. compared. And it was such a great deliverance, that *Moses*, and all the children of *Israel*, sung together unto the Lord, in solemn praises and thanksgivings for it, admiring the riches of his mercy towards them in it, as you may see in *Exod.* 15. 1, &c. And it was so great, that it put the wicked Nations of the Earth into a trembling to hear of it, *ver.* 14, 15, 16. And again, it was so great a deliverance, that the Lord made use of it, as the great and strong tie to bind them to himself in the strictest obedience: And therefore when he gave them the Ten Commandments, he set this engaging Preface

face before them; *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage:* And then he gives them the *Moral Law*; and in them to us, by whom the aforesaid Preface is now to be understood spiritually of his bringing us out of the *spiritual Egypt*, and the *spiritual* Bondage: And therefore we are to be obedient unto him. But now beloved, tho this deliverance was such a great and glorious work, as you must needs say it was, to bring a matter of Six hundred thousand Men, besides Women and Children, with all their Herds and Flocks, out of the Iron Furnace in *Egypt*, where they had been strangers and slaves for Four hundred and Thirty years together, and that with such a *mighty hand, and stretched-out arm*, as brought destruction to their enemies, and redemption to his chosen people: yet, I say, this was but a type of this Freedom by Christ: This, and all else that *Moses* did, as Gods instrument among them, was but to hold forth better things that were afterwards to be done by Christ; See *Heb.* 3. 5. The like might be said of their deliverance out of their Seventy years Captivity in *Babylon*; but I would only instance further in one great Freedom that was among the

*Jews*

*Jews* by the appointment of God himself, and that was, That every 50*th* year, which was called the year of *Jubilee* (of which you read *Levit.* 25.) there was to be a general Releaſe, and Liberty was to be proclaimed throughout all the Land: ſo that they who had ſold, or mortgaged their land or poſſeſſions, were then every one to return to them again, and every *Hebrew* Servant was then to have his Freedom. So that this year was a great and a famous year amongſt them; and 'twas welcomed with a great deal of joy, inſomuch that it was called by them, the *Acceptable year*; Why this alſo was to point out this Freedom by Chriſt; you ſhall find it alluded to in *Iſa.* 61. 1, 2. where the ſame expreſſions are uſed by Chriſt in his ſetting forth his Redemption, as were ſpoken of that year of *Jubilee.* He ſaith, he was ſent to *proclaim liberty* to the Captives, and to proclaim the *acceptable year* of the Lord. So that other Deliverances, and other Freedoms, were but to uſher in this: They were but the Harbingers of this great ſalvation: and in the reading of *them*, you muſt have your thoughts upon this, not only to read them as ſtories, that did but concern that people; but as ſhadowing out the great Goſpel-redemption.

2. Again,

2. Again, 'tis an *incomparable* Freedom, thus, In that *no misery, is like that misery which this Freedom brings us from.* If ever there were a Wretch, indeed he is one that lies in that condition, out of which Christ was sent to deliver us; 'tis such a condition, that if one were truly sensible of it, he would not be in it one day for the whole World, I mean our *natural condition*, which is such a miserable state, that if God bears everlasting love to any person, to be sure he brings him out of it; and if he intends everlasting wrath to any, then he leaves them in it.

3. Again, In that *no mercy is like to that mercy which this Freedom brings us to:* as they shall have misery enough and enough, that continue in the Bondage; so they shall have mercy enough and enough, that partake of this Freedom; they shall have mercy in abundance, they shall be monuments of mercy for ever; and therefore God gives them this Freedom by his Son, that he may convey to them such riches of Grace and Mercy, as that all the common goodness which is bestowed upon the whole World in general, is as nothing in respect of that mercy which one single redeemed person hath, and shall have bestowed upon him: But what this mercy is,

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we shall hear particularly when we come to speak of the *Privileges* of this Freedom.

Property 2*d.* This Freedom is an *unconceivable* Freedom: that is, 'tis an *unknown* thing. Here take notice, 1. What I do not mean by this. 2. What I do mean by it. I do not mean by this, as if the Saints knew nothing of it. Oh! yes blessed be God they do, see 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redemed with corruptible things*, &c. *but with the precious blood of Christ.* — So Colos. 1. 26, 27. —*The mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest unto his Saints.* Mark those words, *'tis* now made *manifest* to his Saints, and God *would make it known* to them; he was resolved that his people in the days of the *New Testament*, should in a special manner have it revealed to them; see also *Eph.* 2. 6, 7. and *cap.* 3. 8, 9, 10, 11. Yea beloved, 'tis so made known now, as that there is not one Child of God upon Earth, but hath the knowledg of it, and none are altogether ignorant of it, but such as are in their lost condition, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4, 6. *But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*

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*In whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believed not, left the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon them: For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our heart, to give the light of the knowledg of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ*: And therefore look you to it, you that live in darkness, and have none of this saving-light shining into your hearts, that cannot tell what to make of Christ and the Gospel; you may see from this Scripture, what a case you are in, and to what company you belong for the present. God is teaching his people in these mysteries. It is written that *they shall be all taught of God*, and so they are, tho not to alike degree.

That which I do mean, when I say that this is an *unknown* Freedom, is in these three things.

1. That Gods people themselves don't know it in that *full manner* and measure, as it is to be known. Surely there is more in it than they do understand, even they who see and know most of it. Nay,

2. That which any of the people of God upon Earth do know of it, as yet is but little in compariſon of what is in this Freedom; and therefore they are ſaid to know but *in part*, 1 *Cor.* 13. Now you know, that but a part of a thing is very ſhort of the whole: They that have attained to the higheſt degree of ſpiritual underſtanding, had need pray that they might be carried further and further ſtill, as *Paul* doth for the *Epheſians*, *cap.* 1. 17, 18. *and* 3. 18, 19. Nay,

3. The Saints in Heaven it ſelf, will never be able to take in all that concerns the glory of this Freedom; tho they ſhall know it there clearly, yet they cannot know it fully; 'tis that which is too great for any but God to comprehend juſt as it is. He only knows his own Love, and his own Mercy to the utmoſt; yet this ſhall be no diminution of the Saints happineſs, that they cannot, even there, fully reach the knowledg of it; for they ſhall know as much of it as it is poſſible for a Creature to know; they ſhall be like Bottles caſt into the Sea, that tho they cannot take in the Sea, yet they ſhall take in ſo much as ſhall make them ſo full that they cannot hold a drop more; but if they could take in

in more, there is more ſtill to be taken in. So that indeed this is an unconceivable Fredoom; the Saints do admire it, and they will admire it for ever: Now our admiring of things, doth not only proceed from our being affected with them, but alſo from hence, that there is more in them than we can well dive into; ſo we cannot go to the bottom of this Freedom, nor ever ſhall, for it hath no bottom: So that the truth is, here we are all poſed; Saints, and Angels are poſed to conceive what this Freedom comes to. You may go to ſome in the World, that can ſearch out deep Myſteries, that can expound Riddles; but this is ſuch a Myſtery, and ſuch a Riddle as no Creature in Heaven or Earth is able exactly to unfold. I may ſay of it, as 'tis in Rom. 11. 33. *O the depth*, &c. Other Freedoms you can fathom, but this you can't.

3*d Property*, It is the moſt *honourable* Freedom; you know when God redeemed the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, he did it in an honourable way; take it in theſe three things.

1. He gat honour to *himself*, *Exod.* 14. 17, 18. by this he declared himself to be above all gods, and above all great Ones of the Earth: God should never have done this work if the *Egyptians*, and all their Idols could have hindred it: You know what a fierce on-set they made upon *Israel* at the Red-Sea to bring them back again; but instead of that, they never went back again themselves; the waters covered their Enemies, there was not one of them left; what a name did the Lord make himself at that time!

2. He honoured his *Promises*; the Children of *Israel* had had many Promises of Deliverance, which by reason of the anguish of their spirits in their Bondage, they could not tell how to believe; they called the Faithfulness and Truth of God into question, (as we are too ready to do, when we are in great straits;) instead of trusting in God firmly, as they should have done, when once they had a word from God, what depth of distress soever they were in; they did not rely upon God's Promise, *Exod.* 6. 6, 7, 8, 9. But when God delivered them, he honoured his Promise for all that, he shewed that he did remember it by the performing of it,

it, *Exod.* 12. 41. *And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out of the land of Egypt.* You must know, that this place looks back chiefly to the promise that God made to *Abraham*, that tho his *seed should be afflicted in Egypt*, yet *he would bring them out* after such a time, *Gen.* 15. 13, 14. Now here in this 12*th* of *Exod.* you see how God honoured his promise, he kept his word *to the very day.*

Obj. *But how did God honour his promise? and how were they delivered the self-same day, when as in that place of* Genesis, *there is just Four hundred years spoken of, that they should be in* Egypt; *and in the other of* Exodus, *'tis Four hundred and Thirty years? It seems therefore, that God failed of his promise Thirty years?*

*Ans.* No: God forbid that we should think so: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one tittle of his word shall not perish.* But you must know, that there may be Two *Reasons* why the Thirty years are not mentioned in the promise to *Abraham.*

(1.) Becauſe 'tis not an unuſual thing amongſt us, to ſwallow up a leſſer number in a greater: As if a man ask you, how old you are, you ſay, ſo many years; and tho there be ſome odd weeks, or months, you omit them, putting the greateſt number for all. So the Thirty years are to be underſtood in the Four hundred, as the Text in *Exodus*, with which the other is to be compared, doth ſhew.

(2.) I ſuppoſe the Lord might of purpoſe conceal theſe Thirty years (tho he did as much intend them as the other), that his people might not preciſely know the very time when their deliverance ſhould be, that it ſhould be this year, or this day, to teach them ſtill to depend upon him for deliverance, even when they might think that their deliverance was neareſt. We muſt truſt God for deliverance: but the very time when it ſhall be, we muſt leave that to him. He uſeth to reſerve that in his own breaſt. But to go on.

3. In that deliverance God honoured his *people*, Deut. 4. 34. Iſa. 43. 3, 4. He gat them a Name, and made them high above all Nations. They were a People that all the World did talk of, that heard what God

God had done for them; how he had redeemed them, and how he had chosen them, and how he went before them.

Well now, beloved, you see this was an honourable deliverance that God gave to them; but this Freedom by Christ is the most honourable Freedom of all. God never so honoured himself by any deliverance as by this: nor did he ever so honour his promises; nor did he ever so honour his people. For the first, see *John* 12. 28. for the second, *Luke* 1, 68. to 74. for the third, *Luke* 2. 32. They are so honoured by this, that they that partake of this Freedom, are said to be made *Kings to God.*

*Property* 4. This Freedom is a *Heavenly* Freedom. They who are interested in it, are said to be *partakers of the heavenly calling*, Heb. 3. 1. And they are called the *heavenly Jerusalem*, cap. 12. 22. and *Jerusalem* which is *above*, Gal. 4. 26. 'Tis such an Heavenly Freedom, that the very Angels desire to look into this salvation which it brings, 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11, 12. Other Deliverances were *earthly*; or at most, the best and greatest of them, as I said, were but

types and ſhadows of better things: but this Freedom is all made up of *Heavenlineſs*. I ſhall make out this by Four things a little:

1. It is the *Sons* Freedom. 2. The *Souls* Freedom. 3. The *Saints* Freedom. 4. The *Scripture*-Freedom.

1. I ſay 'tis the *Sons* Freedom; that which the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God hath procured. 'Tis the Son that makes free. You have had this largely opened to you. Now what an heavenly Freedom muſt this be, that God imployed his own Son in, and ſent him from Heaven on purpoſe about it? When the Lord would redeem his people out of *Egypt*, he ſent *Moſes* and *Aaron* for that work; and they were but Men; but when he would give this Freedom, he ſent one that was more than a Man. 'Tis true, he raiſed up Chriſt from amongſt the *Jews*, according to the fleſh; and the humane Nature did not come immediately from God, but 'twas made of the Seed of *David*. Yea, but *God* was manifeſted in this fleſh: and upon this account he is ſaid to *come down from Heaven*, John 3. 13. and to come *out from*

*from God*, and to come forth *from the Father*, cap. 16. 27, 28. So that in this Freedom, beloved, there came one from the *Throne of God*; yea, one that was *God*, to give it to us.

2. 'Tis the *Souls* Freedom; the Freedom of the Soul. Now you know they must be all heavenly things that can reach that, to do it any good. In other Deliverances they were the *Bodies* of men that were set free; but in this Christ brings *Souls* out of Prison and Bondage. And indeed, herein lies the very main of all the excellency of this Freedom, that it is a Freedom for Souls. If I should have said nothing else about it, but only this, That the precious Souls of Men and Women are redeemed by it, you must needs have said 'tis an excellent Freedom. Yea, beloved, all that I have said, or have yet to say, or can say, runs into this. Oh blessed, joyful, heavenly Freedom by Christ! What a thing is this! What, to bring salvation to *Souls!* to set the Heart, Mind, Will, Understanding, Affections, Conscience at liberty; that when all was bound within with spiritual Chains and Fetters, that were Ten thousand times stronger than those that are made of Brass and Iron: that when the *Soul* sat in darkness,

neſs, and in the ſhadow of death, there ſhould be redemption for that! that Chriſt ſhould pity loſt and undone *ſouls!* Oh heavenly, heavenly, heavenly Freedom! Well may I uſe thoſe words to you here, which the Angel uſed to the Shepherds, *Luke* 2. 10, 11. *Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people: for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord.* Here's a Saviour for your Souls! Where are your Souls, Sirs, by Nature? What a condition are they in? Oh! they are kept the cloſeſt Priſoners that ever were, in the deepeſt darkeſt Dungeon that ever was: and this Priſon they are caſt into for Debt, for Theft, for Murder, for Treaſon; and no Debt like this Debt: for 'tis the Debt of Sins and Iniquities; and no Theft like this Theft; for 'tis for robbing God of his Glory; and no Murder like this Murder; for 'tis for deſtroying your own Souls; and no Treaſon like this Treaſon; for tis againſt the Crown of Heaven. And yet if you will *repent, and believe* the Goſpel, here's a Freedom for your Souls out of all this. Methinks it ſhould be even with us in the hearing of this, as 'tis ſaid in *Luke* 19. 37, 38. *that we*

*ſhould*

*ſhould rejoyce, and praiſe God with a loud voice.* And if we ſhould not be affected with this Freedom, one might think, as *ver.* 40. that if we ſhould hold our peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out.

3. It is the *Saints* Freedom. Indeed 'tis to make ſinners free; but it is not the Freedom of ſinners: That is, as long as perſons are out of Chriſt, they cannot truly call it theirs. 'Tis the portion and priviledg of the children of God. A wicked man *may* have it, but a true Believer *hath* it. The one is under a *poſſibility* of it, but the other is in *poſſeſſion* of it, *Rom.* 5. 2. They have their *ſtanding* in this Grace. They ſtand upon Goſpel-ground. Now what a Heavenly Freedom is this, that none but Saints enjoy! The men of the World may enjoy other Freedoms, but one muſt be in Chriſt to enjoy this. It belongs to the holy Company, *Eph.* 2. 19. Ye are Fellow-Citizens *with the Saints.* Indeed this Freedom doth not *find us* Saints, but it *makes us* ſo. And therefore hereby you may know whether you have any thing of it. Do you think that you are made free by Chriſt, and abide ungodly? To be ſure you deceive your ſelves. The Lord Chriſt never

never redeemed any Soul, to leave it where he found it; he puts it into a contrary ſtate to that which it had before; he found it in darkneſs, but he puts it into Light; he found it in Death, but he puts it into Life; he found it in Wickedneſs, but he puts it into Righteouſneſs; he changes the perſon whom he frees, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. and continuance in ſin is a certain ſign that this Redeemer hath not yet been there.

4. It is the *Scripture*-Freedom: Beloved, tho you read, as I ſaid, of other Freedoms in the Scripture, yet this is *the Scripture* Freedom Joh. 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures, — and they are they which teſtifie of me.* You know what *heavenly* things are contained in the Scriptures: Why now, beloved, this Freedom by Chriſt is the great thing that the Scripture treat of; all other things that are there ſpoken of, are but in order to this; all its Precepts, all its Promiſes, all its Threatnings look this way. It is, as I may call it, the *ſubſtance* of the Scripture; that would not ſpeak of ſin ſo as is doth, if it were not for this Freedom; it would not ſpeak of Chriſt ſo as it doth, if it were not for this Freedom; it would not ſpeak of Death and Judg-

Judgment, and Heaven and Hell, ſo as it doth, if it were not for this Freedom. Yea beloved, 'tis a queſtion whether we ſhould have had any written word at all, if it had not been for this Freedom; this is the great thing that the Scripture commands, and the great thing that the Scripture commends; it bleſſes all them that have it, and it curſes all them that have it not. And, which is an unſpeakable comfort to think of, when a poor Soul hath this Freedom by Chriſt, 'tis then *Freed by Scripture*; it is in a good condition *by Scripture*; there be many that think themſelves in a good condition, but they have no Scripture-grounds for it; ask them how they prove their hopes; they have not one word to ſhew for it in the whole Book of God; but now the Scripture will come and joyn with one that is freed by Chriſt; it will help him to read his Freedom there; and he is one, that however he may be fearing and queſtioning his condition for a time, yet at laſt he will come to this, to be able to ſay, why Lord I am freed *by thine own word*; certainly this is a *heavenly* Freedom then, which the Holy Scriptures are ſo much taken up with. You ſee now by all that hath ſaid upon this *fourth* Proper-

ty,

ty, What great Reaſon there is for that Text of Scripture, Eph. 2. 6. *And hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit togegether in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.* This is done by this heavenly Freedom.

5*th Property*, This Freedom is a *perfect* Freedom; it is ſo already in Chriſt; and by that time he hath done what he intends to do in and for his people, it ſhall be ſo to them. You know the Apoſtle tells the *Coloſſians*, *cap.* 2. 11. that they were compleat in him. It hath not only the perfection of *parts*, as a Child hath, that hath all the members, tho they be not grown; but it hath the perfection of *degrees*, as a man hath that is at his full ſtature. Chriſt's Freedom as it is in himſelf, is full grown; and therefore 'tis able to do great things for us, as you know; if you ſpeak to a Child to help you, he can do but little; but ſpeak to a man that is grown, and in his ſtrength, he can powerfully aſſiſt you. And oh! what a vaſt difference there is between the Freedom that man can give, and the Freedom that Chriſt can give! men may be inſtrumental to deliver us one way, but then they cannot another way; the Creatures arm is too ſhort to reach us,

us, and his hand too weak to help us in every ſtrait: But this Freedom by Chriſt is ſuch a perfect thing, that in whatſoever we have need of it, 'tis as able to help us in one as in t'other. Beloved, there was never ſuch a Saviour as Chriſt is, of all the Saviours that ever God raiſed up to do his people good; *he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt.* When God made uſe of them to be Saviours and Deliverers to his Church, yet ſtill his Church needed another Saviour, and they did not ſave them from their greateſt dangers; but now in Jeſus Chriſt the Church hath got ſuch a Saviour, that they need none other, I mean as to ſpiritual Deliverance.

*6th Property*, And ſo I ſhall end this fourth thing. This Freedom is an *eternal* Freedom. Amongſt men, tho perſons may be ſet free at one time, yet they may come into Bondage at another time; a man may be twice a Slave, and twice a Priſoner, yea many times; but 'tis not ſo here. Where Chriſt gives this Freedom, he ſettles it for ever, Heb. 9. 12. *Having obtained eternal Redemption for us.* It is very true, there will be great and ſtrong endeavours put forth by the Enemies of thoſe whom he

he hath redeemed, to recoverthem again, as it was in *Iſrael's* caſe; but they'l be overthrown in their undertaking, as *Pharaoh* and his Hoſt was. Satans furious attempts to keep thoſe Souls ſtill in Bondage, whom Chriſt will have to be delivered, and to brings back thoſe Souls into Bondage whom Chriſt hath made free, will coſt him the *fall of his Kingdom*; and it will be ſuch a fall, as he and all the forces of Hell that he can raiſe, will never be able to get it up again.

Well now, beloved, having heard the Properties of this Freedom, give me leave to ask you, How do you like it? as when a man brings a thing to you, and bids you make trial of it, and ſee the Conditions and properties of it; when he comes to you again, he will ſay, Well, how do you like it? So, pray now, how do you like this Freedom? What, are you pleaſed or diſpleaſed with it? Will you have it, or will you not? what fault can you find in it? Why ſurely Sirs, 'tis not to be miſliked; is not an *incomparable*, *unconceivable*, moſt *honourable*, *heavenly* Freedom to be liked? What, is there any of you here ſo diſdainful as wont like the Freedom of the *Son?* the Freedom of the *Soul?* the Freedom of the *Saints?* the Freedom of the *Scripture?* Can't you find in your hearts

hearts to like Christ's *perfect*, *eternal* Freedom? Why then what can you like? Truly, I may even say of such as cannot like this, as *Job* doth, cap. 33. of very diseased persons, *whose soul abhorreth dainty meat* (in *vers.* 20.) Your *Soul* (without infinite mercy) *draweth nigh to the grave, and your life to the destroyers*, vers. 22.

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## CHAP. IX.

### *Concerning the excellent Priviledges which this Freedom brings with it.*

FIfthly, This is an excellent Freedom in respect of the excellent *Priviledges* which it brings with it. I have formerly told you, that this is a purchased Freedom; and now I am to tell you that it is a *priviledged* Freedom, it is full of good things. They who are redeemed by Christ, are an *heavenly Corporation*, *the City of the living God*. Now *Corporations* and *Cities* have their *Priviledges*, and some have greater than others; but none so

great as theſe; that Scripture may well come in here, Pſal. 87. 3. *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O thou City of God.* Beloved, I would fain engage your moſt ſerious attention to what ſhall be delivered upon this Subject; and to prepare you for it, I beſeech you to know, that I hope you ſhall hear ſome glorious things ſpoken to you of this City of God, in the opening of the excellent Priviledges which this Freedom by Chriſt brings with it; which when you have heard, I am ſure you will have cauſe to ſay of theſe redeemed ones, as *Moſes* once did of the Children of *Iſrael*, Deut. 33. 29. *Happy art thou, O Iſrael: who is like unto thee, O people, ſaved by the Lord.* I ſhall not ſpend time in things that are but of a general conſideration; otherwiſe I might ſhew you, that there muſt needs be very precious Priviledges attending this Freedom. 1. From the great difficulty that there is to get into this Freedom. As you know thoſe places and conditions, that have great Priviledges, what a hard thing 'tis to get into them; there muſt be a great deal of ſeeking, and waiting, and much coſt and pains laid out, and ſuch and ſuch a great perſon muſt be made ones friend; ſo 'tis no

no eaſie matter to get into this Freedom, to be made one of the Company. If ever you be admitted into it, you muſt *ſtrive to enter:* you muſt think no pains or labour, too much; and you muſt patiently wait upon the Lord, till he have mercy on you: and you muſt be ſure to get God and Chriſt to be your friends; for they have the power, and the diſpoſing of this Freedom; they give it to whom they will. Now what's the Reaſon that there is ſo much ado amongſt men, to procure ſuch a Place, and to be one of ſuch a Society, as many times there is? Why, 'tis becauſe, if they were once admitted into it, there be ſuch Priviledges to be enjoyed, and ſuch profits to be received, as will abundantly recompence all their pains. So here, the difficulty of becoming one of theſe that are made free by Chriſt, ſpeaks that this Freedom is full of excellent Priviledges, 2. From the high eſteem that they have of this Freedom, who are admitted into it through Grace. Say what you will to them, you can never bring them out of love with it again: they'l like their Chriſt, and like their Condition, tho all the world ſhould ſet themſelves to turn away their hearts from it. They'l part with it for no good.

They like it ſo well, that they ſet an higher value upon the worſt of Chriſt, than they do upon the beſt of the World, as *Moſes* did, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. Now certainly this is becauſe their condition is full of *Priviledges.* They know they are better here than they can be any where elſe in the World. 3. From the conſideration of the Saints being ſo often called upon in Scripture to *praiſe the Lord.* They who obſerve, may frequently find how much they are ſtirred up to this duty. How many *Pſalms* doth *David* begin and end with this, *Praiſe ye the Lord?* And he ſays, that the People of God ſhould be a ſinging to him, bleſſing of him, rejoycing, and giving thanks, extolling of the Name of God, declaring his wonderful Works towards them. Now you ſhall ſee, that one main thing that he drove at, why they ſhould do this, was upon the account of the *Freedom* which God had brought them into, *Pſal.* 107. 1, 2. and 136. 1, 2, 3. compared with *ver.* 10, 11, 12, 23, 24. And in *Rev.* 5. you read, that the Saints were at this work of more than ordinary thankſgivings to God: They ſung a Song: What is it for? Oh! for the Freedom they had received. Certainly then, if God hath ſuch great praiſes for

for it, there are great Priviledges in it. But I ſhall not go on thus; but will bring in a Liſt of the Priviledges (ſo far as I can) in particular. And here, as the Prophet ſaid, *Iſa.* 63. 7. *I will mention the loving-kindneſs of the Lord*, &c. They are a priviledged people. For,

*Priviledg* 1. Being made free by Chriſt, they are *tranſlated out of the Kingdom of the Devil.* His Priſon-doors are now opened, that were ſhut ſo faſt upon them, as that none could open them, but *he that hath the key of David.* Now their bondage under that great Tyrant over Souls, is at an end. He ſhall no more have them captive at his will: The yoke of their oppreſſion is broken; See *Col.* 1. 13. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkneſs, and hath tranſlated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.* They are redeemed from the hand of the terrible. *Satan* hath been forced to yield them up; and now he can lay no more claim to them. This Priviledg you read of further in *Heb.* 2: 14, 15. *That through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil; and deliver them who all their life-time were ſubject to bondage.* Mark, he hath delivered

them from the Devil, by *deſtroying* of him; not as to his Being; for the Devil is not dead: 'tis not the Nature of a Spirit to die; but as to his power over them. So he is deſtroyed; he is quite routed, as to any ſlavery that he now keeps them in. He may Lord it over his Vaſſals, whoſe God he is; but with theſe he hath nothing to do, but in a way of moleſtation: ſo indeed he will *vex them* all that he can: and he won't be wanting to follow them with his Temptations, and his fiery Darts. In this kind theſe redeemed ones muſt expect a War with him, *Eph.* 6. 11, 12, 13, *&c.* Chriſt will have them fight, tho he hath made them free; and tho the Devil doth ceaſe to be their Owner, yet he doth not ceaſe to be their Enemy: and he deſigns all the hurt and miſchief to them that poſſibly he can; for they went out of his Kingdom againſt his will and conſent. If he could have ſtaid them, they ſhould never have gone. And therefore his wrath is the more kindled againſt them, and that to ſuch a degree, that he is not only compared to an Adverſary, but to a *Lion*: and this Lion is in the fierceſt poſture of all: he is a *roaring* Lion. But notwithſtanding all his rage, his Dominion is gone. Now beloved, this

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is an excellent Priviledg: Oh, to be looſed from the Chains of Darkneſs! to be turned *from the power of Satan to God!* In this ſenſe, they that are made free by Chriſt, are paſt the Devil's Quarters. And therefore tho they ſhould diligently watch againſt him, yet they ſhould not be ſlaviſhly afraid of him. Do but keep Gods way, and what hurt can he do you? See *John* 5. 18. 'Tis a very unbecoming thing, for a child of God to be afraid of the Devil. What have all the Devils in Hell to do with you, for whom Chriſt ſhed his precious Blood? He himſelf knows that you are none of his; and therefore ſanctifie the Lord God in your hearts, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. 'Tis meet that you ſhould ſtand in awe of him with a holy filial fear: But as for the Devil, you are no longer his.

*Priviledg* 2. This Freedom brings the *pardon* of ſin, which is ſuch a Priviledg, that *David* could not tell how to think of it, or mention it, without wondring at the bleſſedneſs of the man that hath it, *Pſal.* 32. 12. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered. Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not*

*iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile:* or, as 'tis in the *Hebrew*, *Oh the bleſſedneſs of the man*, &c. You would count it a great Priviledg, to have a man to forgive you a great debt, when you can ſay, I owed ſuch a perſon ſuch a great ſum of mony; 'twas as due a debt, as ever any was in the World: and tho I was not able to pay him, yet he might have had the Law againſt me; he might have caſt me into Priſon, and there have kept me all the days of my life: but out of his meer goodneſs he forgave me all: and he hath not only told me, that he will never trouble me for it, but hath given me in the Bond too. Why then, what a great Priviledg muſt it be, to have God to forgive us the great debt of our ſins! for him to ſay, Well, I know, and you know too, in ſome meaſure, what a grievous man or woman you have been; what abundance of diſhonour and provocation I have had with you. Oh the *wicked Nature* that you have! Oh the wicked *Life* that you have led! Oh the wicked *thoughts* that you have thought! *&c.* Now how might I make the fire of mine indignation burn againſt you? What a wretch would you be, if I ſhould deal with you according to your deſerts! But here I do in my infinite

infinite mercy, paſs all by: Inſtead of giving you *puniſhment*, I give you a *pardon*. Why, this is the Priviledg of this Freedom by Chriſt, *Eph.* 1. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of his grace.* And from hence it follows, that now being pardoned, God doth not upbraid his people with their ſins, buthe forgets them in that ſenſe, tho he cannot but remember them by way of knowledg, ſo as to underſtand that they have been committed; yet he forgets them, as to laying them to their charge. In that reſpect he will hear nothing againſt them, not what the Devil ſays by his Accuſations; not what the Law ſaith in regard of its Threatnings and Condemnation. The whole courſe of the Laws proceeding this way, is utterly and eternally ſtopt, *Rom.* 8. 1. *Gal.* 3. 13. And being pardoned, they are *juſtified* in the ſight of God, *Rom.* 3. 24. tho they will, it may be, condemn themſelves an hundred, and a thouſand times after this, and confeſs, and bewail their ſins, and loathe themſelves in their own eyes, and acknowledg that the Lord might juſtly caſt them into the deepeſt torments (as 'tis fit they ſhould); yet in and through Chriſt, God doth not look upon

on them ſo as they look upon themſelves. And again, being pardoned, God is *reconciled* to them: his heart is towards them. But yet there muſt be ſomething more ſtill, than the pardon of ſin, to make a child of God count himſelf a happy man. Yea, you'l ſay, that's ſtrange: I ſhould think my ſelf happy enough, if my ſins were but forgiven me. I, no queſtion of it: But tho a child of God count this an unſpeakable mercy, *Pſal.* 51. 1. yet if there were not ſomething elſe joyned with it, a great part of his happineſs would be wanting; and that is the *ſubduing* of ſin. Which therefore is the next.

*Priviledg* 3. This Freedom brings down the *Dominion of ſin*, Rom. 6. 14. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you.* You that are in your ſins, I know, unleſs God come and work upon you, you would look upon it as no Priviledg at all to have your Luſts curbed. No, you would look upon your ſelves as undone, if you ſhould not have your ſwinge in them, they are ſo dear to you. This is a ſign the Redeemer hath not been with you: But 'tis otherwiſe in thoſe that are Chriſts: As he hath broken the Yoke of their Souls, ſo he makes a Yoke

Yoke for their Corruption, *Matth.* 11.29. Sin muſt reign no more. Before, Pride reigned, and Paſſion reigned, or Uncleanneſs, or Worldlineſs, and ſuch like. Now the Crown muſt be taken off from them; they muſt ſit no longer upon the Throne of the Heart, giving out their Commands, and the poor creature fulfilling of them, tho it be to his own deſtruction. But every Luſt muſt be mortified, and every vile Affection diſcountenanced, and nothing pleaded for, or yeilded to, that proceeds from the Law of Sin, and of Death. And this now the people of God count a Priviledg indeed; Oh! that they are brought into a ſtate wherein their ſins ſhall not, nor can have their head! Oh, how they bleſs God for this Freedom upon this account, that it is an inlet to mortification! for ſo you read it is, in *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. So that no child of God is under the Dominion of any ſin, *Gal.* 5. 24. He that is ſo, is in Bondage ſtill, *Rom.* 6. 16. 2 *Pet.* 2. 19.

And yet ſtill there is ſomething more about ſin, than all this, to make him look upon his Priviledges (ſo far as they do concern that) to be compleat; he cannot count himſelf a happy man indeed, neither

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with the pardon of his ſins, or that ſin doth not reign in him, tho he is glad of this at his very heart; but this ſame loathſome thing ſin is in him ſtill, what ſhall he do for that? *Rom.* 7. 24. Therefore this is another Priviledge that this Freedom will produce.

*Priviledg* 4. The very *being* of ſin in them ſhall ere long be done quite away, *Col.* 1. 22. *Eph.* 5. 26, 27. 'Tis not thus yet; tho the Saints have put on the *new man*, yet they have not perfectly put off the *old*; there are excellent things in them, but 'tis with a blemiſh, they have ſomething to blemiſh them, as well as ſomething to beautifie them. As you know 'tis with a Traveller, as long as he is in his journey, eſpecially, if he be to go againſt wind and weather, he is apt to daſh his Cloaths; if he were but at home, there he would beneat and clean, and you ſhould not ſee one ſpot upon him from head to foot; but while he is a travelling, he gets theſe ſpots, and he cannot tell how to help it. So here, tho while the people of God are in their paſſage, 'tis not all ſo well in them, and with them, as God would have it; nor as themſelves would have it; but

ſhortly

ſhortly when they come home, their ſpots will be all out. Thou Child of God ſhall have no more of this deadneſs, no more of this hardneſs and unbelief of heart; here thou canſt not pray one quarter of an hour without vain thoughts; there thou ſhalt praiſe and glorifie him to all eternity without the leaſt diſtraction. Oh! what a Priviledge will this be, when ſin and you ſhall be quite parted! Now you hear of it in every duty; but there you may be good as long and as much as you will, and no evil to hinder you; *Paul's* complaint is now at an end as to himſelf, becauſe he is at home, *Rom.* 7. 21.

*Priviledge* 5. They who are made free by Chriſt, are made nigh to God, *Eph.* 2. 13. *But now in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Chriſt.* As the people of *Iſrael*, whom he redeemed out of *Egypt*, are called a *people near to God*, Pſal. 147. 14. You know 'tis counted a Priviledg to ſtand near to an earthly King in ſome caſes. The *Queen of Sheba* pronounced the Servants of *Solomon happy* upon this account, 1 *Kings* 10. 8. But as Chriſt ſaid once of himſelf, a *greater than Solomon is here*; here's the King of Heaven and Earth, that

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is the most *high* God, and these are near to *him*; whatsoever is *dear* to us, is near to us. Now the Saints are very *dear* to God: How dear is a Friend to you? And how dear are your Children to you? And how dear is the Apple of your eye to you? Why by these names, the Lord calls his people in the Scripture. Yea beloved, the Lord is very near to them, when they think he is far off from them, *Psal.* 73.23. don't make account that God is at such a distance from you, you that belong to him, as many times you do; you think he is gone away, so that he will never return, and all that while he is hard by you, if you could but see him; remember what he saith in Isa. 41. 10. *Fear thou not, for I am with thee*, &c..

*Priviledg 6.* This Freedom brings Union with Christ, *Eph.* 5. 30. it joyns those to him, who are redeemed by an inseparable bond; Christ is *in them*, and they are *in him*: therefore *Paul* saith Gal. 2. 20. that *Christ liveth in him*; and 'tis said of the Saints, that Christ *dwells in their* hearts by Faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. and Christ and they are not to be considered as two, but as one; he owns them as his Members

bers, and you know they are one with the head; as his Wife, and she is one with the Husband. Now what an unspeakable Priviledg is it to be *united to* Jesus Christ, and what greater honour can a Soul desire, or enjoy, than this is? If you have such a deal of comfort from those earthly Relations in which you stand one to another, as some of you have; tho this is a Union of a low degree in comparison of this; yet you find there is much sweetness in being joyned to a loving Wife, or a loving Husband: Oh, what is it to be joyned to the Lord Jesus Christ!

Obj. But you'l say, *What's a bare Union, if there be no Communications from him? if Christ doth not give out that which he is, and that which he hath to us? there's many a one that is joyned to another in an uniting Relation, that is little the better for it.*

*Ans.* Yea, but to be sure, they who are one with Christ shall be the better for it; for in the next place,

*Priviledg* 7. From this Union flows Communion with Christ, and a communication from Christ of abundance of

of good things to them. I will instance in some, 1. They partake of his likeness and image; to this you read, that they were of old *predestinated*, *Rom.* 8. 29. Hence they are said to have *put on Christ:* as soon as ever he brought them into this Freedom, he began presently, as I may say, to draw his Picture upon them, and they grow more and more like him, every day, by resembling of him in his Graces and walking: The Saints desire to live no other life, but that which is suitable to the life that Christ led; and they would fain imitate and follow him in his holy conversation; they are mightily taken with it; all their trouble is that they can reach it no more. 2. They partake of his *fulness*, *Joh.* 1. 16. 'Tis their Priviledg, being made free by him, to be fetching from him what they need; for tho he hath it *in himself*, yet he doth not keep it *to himself*; no, he means to be liberal of what he hath to all his Members. He is not like the Rich covetous men of the World, that tho they have abundance, yet they hoard it up; they have no readiness in them to distribute; but Christ is all for distributing; and that which his redeemed ones have had, and shall have from him,

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is an unknown deal. 3. They partake of his *Death and Resurrection*, Rom. 6. 5. They dye to sin by the vertue of Christs Death, and they live to God by the vertue of Christs rising again: For beloved, Christ did not do those things barely, that they should end in himself, that none should have a fellowship with him in them. But his design was, that his Death should bring forth another Death, and his Resurrection another Resurrection in the Souls of his people; that they should feel in themselves, that he died by their being crucified to sin, and crucified to the World, and that they should feel in themselves, that he rose by their newness of life, and by their setting their affections upon things above. Now this is a great Priviledg, to have the experience of these things within us; people talk how Christ died and rose again; but where is our conformity to this? Oh! how little doth the power and the virtue of this come to us? 4. They partake of his *Righteousness*; I mean, 'tis imputed to them as their own, that perfect unspotted obedience of his, 'tis to cover all the unrighteousness that is in them, 2 *Cor.* 5 *ult.* Oh, beloved, what a thing is this that a righteousness that is just as the

Scripture would have it, without the leaſt defect, wherein all the holy rules and commands of the word are fulfilled to a tittle, that this ſhould be made over to one, with as great and ſure an intereſt in it, as if one had done all this in ones perſon! why thus 'tis with thoſe whom Chriſt hath made free. 5. They partake of his *Interceſſion*; the Lord Jeſus is at the right hand of the Father on their behalf, *Heb.* 9. 24. he is ſpeaking good words to God for them continually; and his interceſſion is powerful. Oh, with what great Arguments can Chriſt back all the requeſts that he makes to his Father for them, even from what himſelf hath done, and ſuffered, and ſatisfied? 6. They ſhall partake with Chriſt in his *Glory*; many of them are come to it already; and to make it ſure, that not one of his redeemed ones ſhall miſs of it, he intends to come himſelf and bring them all thither, *Joh.* 14. 3. So that not only Chriſt hath a Crown; but they ſhall have one too; a Crown of life, a Crown of Righteouſneſs; *becauſe I live*, ſaith he, *ye ſhall live alſo*; and he doth not count himſelf fully glorified, till he hath got every particular Saint into Heaven. And not only have the people of God upon Earth great longings after Chriſt; oh, that we might

might be with him! but ſurely Chriſt hath greater longings after them: oh, that they might be with me!

*Priviledg* 8. The *indwelling* of the Spirit is another Priviledg, bought by this Freedom; Chriſt having freed them, the Holy Ghoſt takes poſſeſſion of them; now their *Bodies* muſt be his *Temples*, and their *Hearts* his *Throne*, Rom. 8. 11. and oh, the great things that his Spirit doth in them and for them! which I might ſet down as diſtinct Priviledges. But I muſt haſten. By this they are *enlightned*; by this they are *ſanctified*; by this they are *quickned*, *ſtrengthned*, *comforted*, *guided*; the Spirit that dwelt in them before, led them into dark and dangerous paths, gave them evil counſel; was always a provoking of them to be worſe and worſe; but here's one that will be checking and reproving of them, when they walk diſorderly, and that will be grieved at their ſins, and that will countenance and encourage them in way of duty, which is a great benefit.

*Priviledg* 9. This Freedom brings a *right to all the Promiſes*, Gal. 3. ult. And there is more riches in one Promiſe, than

in a thouſand Worlds. I know not what portion ſome of you may deſire, or where you would have your lot to fall; if you could have your wiſh, very like you would deſire ſome huge things in this World, that you might have ſo great an eſtate as ſuch a man hath, *&c.* and then perhaps you would think, if it were but ſo, you had wiſhed your ſelves into a very good condition. But oh, beloved, the Promiſes, the Promiſes, they are the Priviledges indeed; when you have them, you have God in Covenant with you: If you conſider who 'tis that promiſes, and what 'tis that is promiſed, and the certainty that there cannot but be of the faithful and full performance of them, you muſt needs ſay, 'tis an high Priviledg to be intereſted in them.

*Priviledg* 10. It brings *Peace of conſcience*, Rom 5. 1. Heb. 9. 14. This is ſuch a thing, that the having of it, is a kind of Heaven upon Earth, and the want of it is a kind of Hell upon Earth. If a mans conſcience fly in his Face, and the Sence of Guilt, and the Horror of ſpirit, ſeizes on him, let him enjoy the World if he can; 'twill bring down the ſtouteſt heart that is, to have

have but one ſound gripe of it; but theſe redeemed ones are in the way of Peace; Chriſt is to them the *Prince of Peace*, God is to them the *God of Peace*, the Word is to them the *Word of Peace*. When we come amongſt you in our preaching, and denounce the Wrath and Judgments of God; they are not theſe perſons that we mean, we have another meſſage for them; and we muſt in effect ſay to them in our Sermons, as *Paul* doth to them in the beginning of his Epiſtles, *Grace be to you, and Peace, &c.* As amongſt the Children of *Iſrael*, there were two Mountains, *Gerizim* and *Ebal*, one to pronounce the bleſſings upon, and the other for the curſes; So beloved, tho when we would give you that are out of Chriſt, your portion, we muſt do that, as it were from the Mount of curſes; yet when we ſpeak to theſe, we muſt get up on the Mount of bleſſings.

*Priviledg* 11. Is *Preſervance in holineſs.* Hypocrites may fall away, becauſe they were never well on, *Job.* 15. 7. there may come ſomething or other that will daſh their profeſſion to pieces; but theſe are well rooted, and nothing will be able to

pluck them up; you shall not see them turn Saints in the beginning, and turn Devils in the end, as *Judas* did. 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, you read that they had *manifold temptations*; there were divers ways of suffering invented for them, to beat them off from Christ; and *ver.* 7. their faith was *tried with fire*; and yet it would *be found unto praise, at the appearing of Jesus Christ*; and *vers.* 9. for all that they went through, and should receive the *end of their faith, the salvation of their souls*; they should persevere still.

*Privileg* 12. Is *Access to the Throne of Grace*, Heb. 4. ult. Oh! what a Privileg would it be counted upon Earth, that when the King is set down upon his Throne, tho he be in the posture of Majesty, to have free admission to him about a business of great concernment! You know how *Esther* the Queen was afraid to come into the Kings presence, and what a favour 'twas to her, when the King was upon his Throne, that he would reach out his golden Scepter to her, that she might speak freely, and ask what she would, and it should be given to her. But beloved, here's the Throne of the gracious

ous God may be come to, in and through Chriſt, by theſe redeemed ones. They may pour out their very hearts before him; and while they are a praying, he will be hearing: he will *bow down his ear, and attend to the voice of their cry.* He will not bid them go out of his preſence; but they ſhall have audience in Heaven. And if the Lord ſees them afraid, or unable to utter their deſires to him, his Spirit ſhall encourage them, and help their Infirmities.

*Priviledg* 13. Hence follows another Priviledg, That they ſhall have *ſupply to all their wants.* If God withhold any thing from them, to be ſure, tho it be good for others, yet 'tis not good for them in particular, or not good for them at that time when they would have it: and ſo they have good reaſon, either to wait for it till it comes, or to be contented without it, if it ſhould not come at all. Now that this is their Priviledg, ſee *Phil.* 4. 19. *But my God ſhall ſupply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Chriſt Jeſus.* And God's children ſhould live as thoſe that believe this: And they ſhould be *careful for nothing*; and take no thought for their life, nor for their meat, nor their drink, nor their cloath-

ing. I don't say, you must not *use means* for these things. God doth not now provide for us, as he did for the children of *Israel* in the Wilderness, by *raining down bread from Heaven.* No: if you will *eat*, you must *work*: but you must work without perplexity; the Cares of the World must not fret your hearts: If they do, either you do not belong to God, or you forget your Privilege; which indeed is a very great one, That *having given you his Son, he will with him also, freely give you all things*, Rom. 8. 32.

*Priviledg* [illegible] 4th, They that are made free by Christ, are *under special protection*; as you know the children of Kings, and great Persons, they must have some always with them, to see that they get no harm. So beloved, these persons, they are well guarded: the Lord himself watches over them. 'Tis true, he doth employ Angels for their safety; and you'l say, that's a great matter, that Angels must wait on them, and be doing them all the good they can, *Psal.* 91. 11. *Heb.* 1. *ult.* But God is so tender over them, that he will not trust Angels alone with them, but he hath also committed them, the care of them, particularly

cularly to his *Son*. Whereupon Christ saith, *Joh.* 17. *Those whom thou hast given me, I have kept*: and yet he will look after them himself too: He is *with* them, *Isa.* 41. 10. or he goes before them, and then he is behind them too, *Isa.* 52. 12. and then on every side of them, *Psal.* 125. 2. If this be not enough for their protection, then he will *lead* them, *Isa.* 49. 10. if that be not enough, then he will *cover* them, *Psal.* 91. 4. if that be not enough, then he will *carry* them, *Isa.* 46. 4.

*Priviledg* 15. They are *interested in the prayers of all the Saints in the World.* It may be they are prayed for, some where or other, all the day long; yea, all the week; yea, all the year; yea, all their life: For it is like that there is a continual stock of Prayers a-going, by some or other of them, night and day: And they don't use to pray for themselves alone, but for others, and for their Fellow-Members most of all, as *Paul* did for the Churches of Christ.

*Priviledg* 16. Their Priviledges about their Afflictions are very great; as that they *shall* be, 1. *moderated.* God will not lift his Arm too high when he strikes, nor make his Rod too big when he whips them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. 2. *Sweetned*, Heb. 12. 6.

*For*

*For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* *Loveth*——and *Son*, these be words to sweeten his Corrections. 3. They shall be *sanctified*; they shall be *for our profit*, ver. 10. There is either some Sin to purge out, or some Grace to be brightned, or increased, or some choice Experience to be learned. 4. At last *removed*. God will be sure to hold his hand when 'tis enough, and to comfort them when they have mourned enough, and to take them out of the fire when they have been tried enough. He that hath redeemed *Israel* it self, shall also *redeem Israel out of all his troubles*.

*Priviledg* 17. They have *acceptance of their poor sincere duties*. Alas! what is it that they do, or can do for the great God to take any notice of it? and yet God is well pleased with them, *Heb.* 13. 16. *But to do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* 1 Pet. 2. 5. *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

*Pri-*

*Priviledg* 18. They ſhall be *bleſſed in and after death*: *in* their death, for they ſhall *die in the Lord*: and after death, for *they ſhall be for ever with the Lord.* As here they are brought into a Kingdom of Grace, ſo there they ſhall be brought into a Kingdom of Glory. Then comes the *reſt*, the *inheritance*, the *pleaſures for evermore*, the *building of God*, *the houſe not made with hands*, *eternal in the heavens*; the *bleſſed hope*, the *everlaſting life*. Much time might be ſpent about theſe Priviledges, and many others that might have been mentioned: But I ſhall ſtay no longer upon them. Now beloved, Is not this Freedom by Chriſt, an excellent thing upon this account too, namely, the excellent Priviledges which come by it? And truly now you have heard them, methinks you ſhould not be able to forbear going to God when you come home, pouring out your moſt earneſt cries to him in theſe words (with which I will cloſe up this 5*th* Head), *Pſal.* 106. 4, 5. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bear-eſt unto thy people: O viſit me with thy ſalvation: That I may ſee the good of thy choſen: that I may rejoyce in the gladneſs of thy nation: that I may glory with thine inheritance.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. X.

### *Concerning the excellent Uses that may be made of this Freedom.*

THE Sixth way of making out the excellency of this Freedom by Christ, is to acquaint you with the *excellent Uses* that may be made of it. The worth and value of any thing is seen in the Uses to which it may be put. That which is of no use, is naught: that which is of some use, is good: that which is of great use, is very good: but that which is of the greatest use, is best of all. Now beloved, to give this Freedom its due place, I must put it amongst those things which are of the highest use: and in doing so, I shall not set it one jot above what it deserves: for the highest place doth of right belong to it. Now in speaking upon this, I might shew,

1. *The excellent Uses which Christ makes of this Freedom.*

2. *The*

2. *The excellent Uſes which Chriſtians may make of it.*

I ſhall be brief upon the firſt, becauſe I do chiefly intend the latter.

To the 1*ſt* I will hint but Four excellent Uſes which *Chriſt* makes of it.

1. By this Freedom, he *brings home all the elect of God:* He fetches them one after another into the Kingdom of Grace and Glory. It was the will of God concerning thoſe whom he hath choſen in the eternal purpoſe of his love, that they ſhould be made holy in this World, and happy in the World to come. Now by this Freedom Chriſt doth accompliſh that will of his Father: he brings them unto *holineſs* by it, *Tit.* 2. 14. and he brings them to *happineſs* by it, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. So that this Freedom will diſcover who they are that are elected, and who are not: For they that are *elected*, will be *ſanctified* and *glorified*; and they that are not, will remain in their ſins, and be damned. It will ſeparate between the precious and the vile, between the *Tares* and the *Wheat*, between the *Sheep* and the *Goats*. By that time the work of this Freedom is finiſhed, it will ſet

ſet the children of God by themſelves, and the children of the Devil by themſelves, that they ſhall never come near one another more, *Matth.* 25. 31, 32, 46.

2. By this Freedom Chriſt *repairs the great breach by the Fall of mankind.* He heals that deadly wound, and makes up that unſpeakable loſs for as many as believe on his Name. In that Apoſtacy from God, the Devil did a World of miſchief to the Sons of Men: but by this Freedom Chriſt undermines him, and out-plots him; and he brings his whole deſign againſt the Elect of God to nothing: and thereof you read, 1 *John* 3, 8. that Chriſt was manifeſted for this purpoſe, that he might *deſtroy his works.* The Devil was hard at work when he brought in the Fall, and all the ſin and miſery that followed upon it. He never wrought harder in his life, than he did at this time, and at one more, and that was when Jeſus Chriſt was in the World, and now come in perſon to reſtore liberty by the Goſpel; Then he wrought ſo hard to withſtand the ſalvation of ſinners by Chriſt, that I may ſay, after our manner of expreſſing things, he ſweat till he dropt again: He was, as it were, all of a foam with

with rage: And he ſhewed it ſufficiently from the very Birth, to the very Death of Chriſt. And 'tis obſervable for this, what Chriſt ſaith in *Luke* 22. 53. when *Judas* and his company were come to take him, that that time was the *power* of Darkneſs; *i. e.* Satan was then at work with all his might. But to look back again to the Fall, Oh, how he was at work there! And when he had prevailed with our firſt Parents in the Temptation, no doubt but he thought that he had made ſtrong and ſure work of it; that all was now his own for ever: for he knew that man could never recover himſelf: and he knew that all the Angels in Heaven were not able to do it: and he knew, that tho God in mercy could have pardoned them, yet that muſt not be neither, without ſatisfaction to his Juſtice: and he little thought of any ſuch way to be taken, as for God to ſend his only begotten Son into the World, that the World through him might be ſaved, tho it was not long after, but he had an incling of it, *Gen.* 3. 15. Now Chriſt by this Freedom, cruſhes and breaks the Devil's head; *i. e.* ſpoils all the Maſter-peice of his malice and ſubtilty; reſtores that Image of God of which he had robb'd us; brings in a Co-

venant

venant of Grace for a Covenant of Works broken; and begins the World a-new, as it were.

3. By this Freedom, Christ *executes the three great Offices of a Prophet, Priest, and King.* God the Father appointed and anointed him to all these Offices, and by this redeeming-work he does discharge them. His Office of a Prophet, is to teach his Church the things that are needful to their Salvation; by this Freedom he discharges that; therefore *Joh.* 15. 13. with *vers.* 15. when he tells them that he had shewed his great love to them in *laying down his life for them*, that is, to make them free; he adds this, that he had made *known all things to them, which he had heard of his Father*, that is, which his Father had sent him to teach them in, for their spiritual and eternal good. His Office of a *Priest*, was to suffer and satisfie for them upon Earth, and to intercede for them in Heaven, and by this Freedom he discharges that, *Heb.* 2. 17. His Office of a King, is to rule in his Church by way of increasing, preserving, defending, and ordering of it, and by this Freedom he discharges that; as in *Isa.* 9. 6, 7. you may see. So that all that Christ doth, it re-

relates to this Freedom; either 'tis in order to the giving of it, or elſe 'tis the fruit and effect of his having given it; we cannot name any thing that ever he did, or yet doth, or ſhall do as Mediator, but it ſome way or other runs into this.

4. By this Freedom *Chriſt leaves matter of the higheſt Condemnation upon the refuſers of the Goſpel.* Sirs, I beſeech you conſider this, The Lord Jeſus is reſolved to make uſe of this Freedom one way or other, with all of you, either to ſave or damn you: Where he can't make the *one* uſe, that is to *ſave* ſinners, he will make the *other* uſe of it, that is to *ſink* ſinners. Where it doth not ſerve as an Engine to raiſe them, 'twill ſerve as an Engine to ruin them. Doubt not of it, Chriſt will have enough to ſay from this ſalvation of his, when he hath offered it, and you have deſpiſed it, to leave you without excuſe. 'Twill furniſh him abundantly with Arguments to plead againſt you, that will ſtop all your mouths at the laſt day; when he ſhall tell you, how he had prepared a Remedy that would have delivered you from all your miſery, and how he did moſt willingly ſhed that precious blood of his, which would have waſhed away all your

fins: and if you had but come to him, you might have been as safe, and as blessed as others that believed in him: but nothing would prevail with you to bring you in: You either did not look after him at all, or if you did, it was not to purpose: You could not find in your hearts to turn every sin out of doors: there must be something of your Lusts that must be spared, and something of his Terms that must be abated: You were afraid of buying Christ too dear. Well now, what shall Christ do, but make use of this Freedom and Gospel for a Witness against you? and be sure of it, he is resolved to do it. That place doth intimate so much to you before-hand, in *John* 3. 18, 19. But I shall say no more of the Uses which Christ makes of this Freedom; but shall come to shew the excellent Uses that Christians may make of it.

And in reference to them, I shall lay down in Twelve things, *what this Freedom is good for.*

1. To make them from their hearts to *pity Christless persons:* To do that in some measure which you read of Christ, concerning *Jerusalem*, which *did not know the things*

*things of their peace in the day of their visitation*; when he came near the City, he *beheld it, and wept over it.* So, beloved, this Freedom is good to make them that have it, to *weep* over them that have it not; and to say, Ah poor sinners! ah precious souls! where are you? what will become of you? It will present unconverted men and women, to the mind and thoughts of a Believer in Christ, as the saddest spectacles that ever their eyes beheld. Their Freedom now, makes them sensible what 'tis to be a sinner. While they were in the Bondage themselves, they saw not the danger that was in that condition; but now they do: and so they are prepared to pity every one that is left behind. Indeed they see (and 'tis commonly to be seen) that these Christless persons are secure and merry, as if all were as well as could be. But all this makes those that have this Freedom, to pity them the more. It would be some comfort to them, to see them struck down with Convictions, that things are not well within them; and to hear them cry out as the Jaylor did to *Paul* and *Silas*, *Sirs*, *what must I do to be saved?* &c. But to see them in their sins, and yet to be *secure*; to see them under the Curse, and yet to

be *merry*, Oh! this sets their hearts a bleeding. Now take some Scriptures where you shall see that this Freedom is good for this excellent use and purpose; see *Psal.* 119. 158. also *ver.* 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes; because they keep not thy law. Obj.* But you'l say, this is the *Old Testament. Ans.* What tho it be? the Freedom was in force then, and *David* was a partaker of it. But would you have something out of the *New Testament* for it? see then *Phil.* 3. 18. *Rom.* 9. 1, 2, *&c.* where you find, that *Paul*, who was in this Freedom, had tears in his eyes, and heart-breaking grief within him, for those that went Christless. And beloved, this Freedom will teach Ministers that have it, to pity their Christless Hearers; and Parents that have it, to pity their Christless Children; and Masters that have it, to pity their Christless Servants, *&c.* And is not this an excellent use now? I dare say, you can't be in this Freedom, any of you, but your bowels and compassion will work in some measure, instead be moaning the wretched condition of persons in a state of Nature.

2. It

2. It is good to make us *underſtand the Goſpel.* This Freedom ſets up a light to ſhew us what that is. Friends, this word *Goſpel*, is a Myſterious word, and carries ſuch things in at, as no natural man can receive or percieve, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. Now, oh, what an excellent thing would it be to underſtand thoſe things which all the wiſdom of the men of this World, (who underſtand abundance upon other accounts) is not able to tell what to make of! Why, now come into this Freedom, and the mind and the Myſteries of God will be unfolded to you; you will be brought out of darkneſs into the marvellous light; Chriſt and the Covenant of Grace will be revealed to you; *you ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free*, verſ. 32. of this 8*th* of *John*. As *Luther* ſaid when he was brought to the knowledg of Chriſt, and of juſtification by faith, that *the whole Scripture ſeemed to be a new thing to him*; he ſaw that in it which he never ſaw before: ſo 'twill be with you. What's the reaſon that perſons are ſo ignorant of heavenly things, as they are, of the new Birth, of the Life of Faith, of Communion with Chriſt, but becauſe they are not brought into this Freedom? Certainly this would make

the Bible another manner of thing to many of you, than ever 'twas yet. Oh, the insight that those get into the Wisdom and Grace of God, who are brought into this liberty, of that they had before! Now they can speak of Salvation by the Son of God, and the things which belong to it, like knowing men; this Freedom hath opened the eyes of their understanding. Beloved, what *Sampson* said to the *Philistines*, when he had propounded a riddle to them, the meaning of which they were not able to pick out, but by the help of his Wife; Judg. 14.18. *If*, saith he, *ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle*; the same I may say, of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God; you'l never discern them, if you don't make use of Christs Freedom; for they are like the Book, *Rev.* 5. which was *sealed with seven seals*, and none was able to open it, or to look thereon with any understanding, till Christ had opened the Seals thereof. In *Eph.* 1. 7. the Apostle speaks, that they had gotten this Freedom by Christ; and then in *verf.* 9. he brings in this, *Having made known to us, the Mystery of his will*; *then* they came to know it.

3. Ano-

3. Another excellent uſe of this Freedom is this: It is good to *endear Chriſt to the Soul*: Alas, what is Chriſt to thoſe, who remain in the Bondage of ſin? What beauty do they ſee in him? What breathings have they after him? You were even as good tell them of a chip, as tell them of Chriſt, for any regard they have to him; there's nothing that is of leſs account or eſteem with them, than he is. He is called there, in *Iſa.* 49. 7. one *whom man deſpiſeth*, and *whom the nation*, (i. e. of the *Jews*) *did abhor*. What two greater words for undervaluing of Chriſt, can you meet with, than to *deſpiſe* him, and *abhor* him? But now the having of this Freedom, oh, 'twill make Chriſt a precious Chriſt to the Soul, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. they can't but prize him, who have been redeemed by him, when they conſider what he hath done for them; that he came down from Heaven for *them*, and became poor for *their* ſakes, and that he was mocked and ſcourged, and ſpit upon for *them*, and upon the Croſs for *them*, and bear the Wrath and Curſe of God for *them*: Oh how doth this make them to be highly in love with him! and to wiſh that they had a thouſand times more love for him, then they

have. And certainly, you that believe in Christ, this is one great means to raise up your love to him; when you do find or fear that your Affection to him begins to be chilled, to set your selves to meditate upon the Freedom that he hath given you, and how abundantly he hath shewed his dear Love to you, in dying for you, and in washing of you in his own Blood; ply your hearts a while, as hard as you can, with deep and serious thought about this; I am perswaded 'twill prove a love-kindling, and a love inflaming consideration to you; you will find that you have affections, and dear affections, for Christ again.

4. It is good to make *all ones life comfortable.* As the being without this Freedom, is the way to make all ones life miserable; so the having of it, and the knowing that one hath it, laies in matter of daily consolation. Let whatever will befall a man, this will be always at hand to cheer him; there is no cordial to the heart like it, when a man can look upon his troubles, and say, Notwithstanding 'tis thus and thus with me, yet, blessed be God, he hath had mercy on me. I belong to Christ, and what can hurt me?

You

You would not much fear living comfortably, if you had but two things in your comfort. 1. That it were so strong, that nothing could overcome it. And 2. That it should be so lasting, that it would never have an end. Why now, such comfort this Freedom brings, *Heb.* 6. 18. and 2 *Thess.* 2. 1. in the one place 'tis called *strong* Consolation; and in the other *everlasting* Consolation. And therefore away with that vile reproach, which some are apt to cast upon the condition of Gods people, that 'tis *a melancholy life*; as if persons must never look to be merry more in this World, after they are once turned *Godly*; the Devil hath always something or other to blind and befool sinners, and to make them think that *their* condition is the merry condition, and the Saints condition the mopish condition; but if ever he were a liar, he is a liar in this; and God will judg him and his instruments for bringing up this evil report upon the good Land which he hath given his people. Beloved, be not discouraged by this slander, from looking after this heavenly *Canaan*, as the Children of *Israel* were from entring into the earthly *Canaan*, when the Spies that went to search the land had spoken evil of it to them;

them; for as *Caleb* ſaid to them, the ſame I ſay to you, The Land is an exceeding good Land!; I mean now, the ſtate into which Chriſt hath brought believers, is even in *this World* a joyful ſtate. You ſhall ſee how it was prophecied of, in the *Old Teſtament*, that it ſhould be ſo, *Pſal.* 67. read *verſ.* 1, 2. where he ſpeaks of the coming of this Freedom. *God be merciful unto us, and bleſs us, and cauſe his face to ſhine upon us. Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy ſaving health among all nations*; and what follows, why *verſ.* 3, 4, 5. *Let the people praiſe thee, O God: let all the people praiſe thee: O let the nations be glad and ſing for joy*; there's the joy that it brings with it. So *Iſa.* 35. 10. this chapter is to he underſtood of Goſpel Freedom and Salvation; and mark what Joy here is now. *The ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and come to Zion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads: they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away. Obj.* But where can you ſhew us the people in the *New Teſtament*, that live ſo comfortably and joyfully by this Freedom, and that in this World? Why, turn to Rom. 5. 2. *By whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace*

*grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoyce in hope of the glory of God*; and verſ. 10, 11. *For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life. And not only ſo, but we alſo joy in God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have received the attonement.* *Obj.* But it may be they were a people that met with no great afflictions; if they had, it would have ſpoiled their joy, tho they were in this Freedom. Well, for that I'll give you a full Scripture, ſee 1 Pet. 1. Theſe were *ſcattered abroad by perſecution*, verſ. 1. They had *manifold temptations*, verſ. 6. And in v. 7. the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the tryal of their Faith *by fire*: Yet in *verſ.* 8. how comfortable they were for all this, *In whom tho now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* Sirs, you that are out of this Freedom, are hindred by it from abundance of joy; you don't know what true joy and true comfort is, without it.

5. It is good to make us *taſte the ſweetneſs that is in the ways of God*; 'twas the Spouſe of Chriſt, the redeemed company, that uttered that in *Cant.* 2. 3. *I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and*

*his*

*his fruit was sweet to my taste*: Duties, Ordinances are sapless things without this, but they are refreshing, yea, ravishing things with it. What made *David* say, that a *day in Gods Courts, was better than a thousand otherwhere?* 'twas because he was in this *Freedom*. Why did the Lord call his Ordinances that should be under the Gospel, *A feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well fined*, Isa. 25. 6. But, because he knew they would be so to Souls that should be brought into this Freedom. Oh, this is that which will make a *Prayer* sweet, and a good *Sermon* sweet, and a *Sacrament* sweet, and *Grace* and the *Exercise* of it sweet. You thatare in the Bondage of sins, may come and hear precious truths, but you cannot tell what is in them, for savour and relish; that Bondage hath put your mouths quite out of taste, as I may say to you; there's nothing so sweet, as that which is most bitter, and that is sin; if your palat were not vitiated by this Bondage, you would call it, as the Scripture calls it, viz. *The gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity*, Acts 8. 23.

6. This

6. This Freedom is good to make us *ſpiritually uſeful.* Indeed one that hath it not, may be uſeful, and very uſeful for earthly reſpects; and if he ſhould be taken away by death, there might be a great miſs of him; the family might want him, or the Pariſh may want him: But ſpiritually uſeful ſuch a one is not, nor can be, any otherwiſe then as a wooden leg can be uſeful to the body, which tho it helps it a little, yet 'tis but outwardly, it hath none of that life or motion that the true members have. But now, they whom Chriſt hath made free, oh, what a deal they are good for, upon a ſpiritual account; they are uſeful perſons to bring up a Family for God, they are good for the *Souls* of their Relations. You that are out of Chriſt, you may be good for the bodies of your Children; you may be good to provide them Meat, and Drink, and Cloaths, and to take care of them, when any of them fall ſick, that they may not want attendance, or the like; or you may be good to train them up in a civil way, and to lay up for them, what you can, for a Portion in this World, or to put them to a good Trade, or help them to as rich a match as you can, and in theſe kind of things

things your usefulness to them, is at its journeys end. As for the poor Souls of your Children; you forget them, because you never rememberd your own; it may be you'l say to your Children sometimes, *you must be a good boy, or a good girl,* and there's all the good counsel that they shall have of you; but alas, you take no care to tell them which way they must be good indeed; and truly, if God should take you away from them, and leave them Fatherless and Motherless, their outward man would miss you sadly, it may be; but their Souls would not; you were never good for them; but they who are in this Freedom are good for the Souls of their Family. And beloved, they are very useful persons to promote a good work, when they see it would tend much to the Glory of God, to have it carried on, and to take occasions and opportunities of speaking to others about everlasting concernments; and to mourn for the sins of the times and places in which they live, and to stand in the gap when the Wrath of God is breaking in upon a Nation; and when God takes away one of these, oh, what a miss there is of them, and what a loss 'tis upon the best account! If God had pleased, a hundred

dred wicked men might have been better ſpared than one of theſe. The leaſt of theſe is ſo uſeful, that the greateſt in Grace can't ſay, they have no need of him, 1 *Cor.* 12. 21. and mark what 'tis ſaid of *Oneſimus*, *Phil.* verſ. 10. *Whom I have begotten in my bonds*; that is, Chriſt hath now given him his Freedom, by uſing me as an inſtrument for his converſion. Well, what then? Why verſ. 11. *Which in time paſt was to thee unprofitable: but now profitable to thee and to me.* Now he becomes a profitable man.

7. It is good, again, to *knit our hearts in love to all the people of God.* Oh! how dear will the Saints be to us, when we ſee that we are delivered from the power of darkneſs, and that God hath tranſlated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son! When we can ſay to them, Now bleſſed be the Lord, I am one of you, I am a partaker of your Grace, and have obtained like precious Faith with you; that Blood which hath waſhed you, hath waſhed me; that righteouſneſs of Chriſt which covers your unrighteouſneſs, covers mine alſo: For if one finds it ſo, one may to the Glory of God tell them ſo, as *Paul* did to the Galatians chap. 2. 20. That *Chriſt had loved*

*ved him, and given himself for him.* This now will so joyn our affections to the Saints (at least it will be the way to it), that our Souls will as it were *cleave* to their Souls; 'twill not only joyn hand to hand, but *Soul to Soul.* That's a notable place, Acts 4. 32. *And the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of one soul,* &c. When once they were got into this Freedom together, (which is included in the word *believed.*) Oh what a love here was to one another! This is an uniting Freedom, not only to Christ, as you have heard, but to all his members.

8. It good is to *strengthen our Faith* in the greatest straits. For by this Freedom a Child of God may reason thus; Why, he that brought me out of that dreadful misery of my sinful condition, that did so great a work as *that*, and gave me so great a deliverance as *that*, can bring me out of this. I cannot come into such a woful condition again, as that was, let befall me what will for affliction or trouble; 'tis not like my spiritual Bondage that I was in, while out of Christ; and yet, through infinite mercy I am freed from it; and did God remember me there, and shall he not remember me here? *David*, when he prays for

for deliverance out of his preſent diſtreſſes, thinks of this, that God hath redeemed him; ſo you may fetch a mighty ſupport *from your redemption* by Chriſt, for your weak Faith, when great Tryals are upon you; what, do you think that God will let you periſh in them, and he hath *redeemed* you? why, which is more, to deliver thee out of the hand of the *Devil*, and out of the hand of Gods *Juſtice*, and from the *Wrath to come*; or to deliver thee out of ſome *light Afflictions* in this World?

9. It is good to *make you rich.* Oh! how do many deſire to be rich? Now this is the way to make you,

(1.) *Really* rich; not to ſeem to be rich, and yet be poor, as ſome do; but rich *indeed*: So rich that you ſhall have treaſures, *In the houſe of the righteouſneſs, is much treaſure*; 'tis becauſe he hath this Freedom; indeed this Freedom is his treaſure, as 'tis ſaid, *Prov.* 13.8. *The ranſom of a mans life are his riches*; 'tis true here.

(2.) *Inwardly* rich; rich towards God in Grace, and things of a ſpiritual nature. *Obj.* But I would fain have ſomething, if pleaſe God, of this World too. *Anſ.* Why

this Freedom is the way to that too, *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. *Obj.* But they who have this Freedom, are generally the poorer sort, 1 *Cor.* 1. 27. *Not many mighty, not many noble, are called. Anſ.* 1. They are not all ſo then, as you ſee there. 2. God doth that for them, tho they be poor, which is equivalent to great riches, even in this World. For 1. He ſupplies them many times by *ſpecial Providence*: God ſtirs up the hearts of others to do them good. There were poor Saints at *Jeruſalem*, that had not of their own; but the Lord provided for them, by putting it into the hearts of others, that were able, to make a Collection for them, *Rom.* 15. 26. So *Paul*, tho he had not of his own, yet the *Philippians* ſent once and again to his neceſſity, *cap.* 4. 16. and that ſupplied him ſo in his preſent wants, that he looked upon himſelf as a rich man, *verſ.* 18. 2. What is wanting in abundance, God makes up in *contentment*, *verſ.* 11, 12. of that *chap.* and this is equivalent to a great Eſtate; nay, there be many that have great Eſtates, and yet are not contented. Now, pray who is the rich man, he that hath but a little, and yet is contented,

or

or he that hath a great deal, and yet is discontented? 3. God gives his *blessing* with that little they have, and the *blessing of the Lord maketh rich*, Prov. 10. 22. 'tis not so much what a man hath, as what God blesses to him. A great Estate *without* that, will prove cankered and wormeaten; and with that, less by far will do the business.

(3.) This Freedom is good to make you *eternally* rich; there be many that are very rich in this World, and yet will be miserably poor in the World to come, because they never had this Freedom by Christ. Indeed, people use to say, when a man hath a great Estate, that he is *made*; yea, but for how long? 'tis but, at most, for this life. If he be not in Christ, there's that a coming, that will *unmake* him again; but he that is so, is *made for ever*, Prov. 8. 21. *That I may cause those that love me, to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.* *Substance* and *Treasures*, there's their riches; yea, but then saith he, I'll cause them to *inherit* it too, *i. e.* I will *make* them for ever.

10. This Freedom is of excellent use to *keep Christians humble*; it greatly becomes

the people of God, to have low thoughts of themselves; of all Christians, the humble Christian is the most lovely Christian. If I see a man, tho I hope, and believe he hath graces, yet if he be not humble, methinks he is not half so beautiful in his walking. Whatever good thing one hath in him besides, yet to have the heart to be lifted up, 'tis even like the dropping of a great blot of Ink upon fair writing: How fair would the story of good *Hezekiahs* Life and Reign have been, of whom you read so many excellent things, all along the 2 *Chron. cap.* 29. and 30. and 31. and 32. had it not been for that one great blot, which you meet with in *vers.* 25. of *chap.* 32. Beloved, the Grace of Humility is the Glory of ones Graces. Well, but then, what is good to make us, and keep us humble? Oh, nothing like this Freedom by Christ. If we do but make use of it, as we might, it would lay us as low as the ground, yea, as low as Hell in our own thoughts; for thus a Child of God may reason with himself: By this Freedom I have great Priviledges; and I may say of Gods kindness to my Soul in his Son, as *David* did concerning Gods making a Covenant with him, 1 Cor. 17. 17. *Thou hast*

*haſt regarded me according to the eſtate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.* And now in compariſon of theſe heavenly riches and hopes, which I have beſtowed upon me, I contemn all the World, and count all things, as *Paul* ſaid, *but loſs and dung.* I, but 'tis all by Grace, not for any deſert of mine; was I *worthy* that God ſhould do this for me? Is not this the richeſt alms that ever was, to the pooreſt beggar that ever was? I am arrayed in a coſty Robe, (for the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is ſo); but where had I this good cloathing? I am freed from Condemnation, but who diſcharged me? I ſee, but who opened mine eyes? I am a King to God, but who gave me my ſpiritual Crown? Is it not of free Grace? And if God ſhould take away his free Grace, what ſhould I have left? Well therefore, how humble muſt I be, as well as how thankful? And if I may ſay, as *David* did in the words before mentioned, in *verſ.* 17. Have I not cauſe alſo to ſay as *David* did by way of ſelf-abaſement, verſ. 6. *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* Oh, this Freedom by Chriſt is a good weapon to run into the very heart of ſpiritual Pride; to ſhut it out of doors.

In *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26. where the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of it, that it comes *freely*, and brings with it *remiſſion of ſins, and juſtification through faith* in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; you ſhall ſee he adds this in verſ. 27. *Where is boaſting then? it is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.* As if he ſhould ſay, Oh, what Doctrine is this Doctrine, of redemption by Chriſt, to lay us all low!

11. This Freedom is of excellent uſe, to *engage us to Chriſt in the ſtricteſt obedience.* As it was the *cord of Love*, to draw us *to him* at firſt: So it is the *Bond of Love*, to keep us *with him.* And this is the great deſign of *Paul* throughout his Epiſtles to the Churches, to ſhew how the Grace of the Goſpel, doth oblige them to a holy Converſation in all things, and to bring forth fruit unto God. One would think, beloved, that the conſideration of this Freedom, if we have a part in it, ſhould keep us from everfitting looſe from Chriſt more; but that we have ſuch naughty hearts, that almoſt nothing is ſtrong enough to hold us in. Surely, there is much in it, to ſtir up a Chriſtian to all that is good. Oh! if one did but feel the Power of this Freedom upon ones heart, what a life ſhould

ſhould one lead! What a frame ſhould one be in? How would it *water* our Grace, and cauſe our ſins to wither? See for this that Scripture, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. *For the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judg, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them, and roſe again.* Mark that word *conſtraineth.* As if he ſhould ſay, we muſt *needs* be holy when we think of this Freedom; it ſo ſhuts up in the narrow way which leadeth to Life, that we cannot get out. Tho our carnal part would fain have *its* liberty; yet this liberty by Chriſt will not permit it. Indeed, holineſs and cloſe walking with God, is the great Leſſon which this Freedom teacheth, 2 *Tim.* 11, 12. and without this, we don't *uſe, but abuſe* our Freedom. And therefore, what the Apoſtle ſaid to them, in *Gal.* 5. 13. is very fit to be minded here: *For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only uſe not your liberty for an occaſion to the fleſh.* Beloved, if ye be not very watchful, the fleſh will take an occaſion from the good condition which Chriſt hath brought you into; to inſinuate it ſelf, and draw you

into remiſneſs in good things: As if ſince there is ſuch abundance of grace revealed, there need not be altogether ſuch circumſpection in every thing you do; but what he ſaith there to them, in *verſ.* 8. I ſay to you, *This perſwaſion cometh not of him that calleth you.* This Freedom will not allow you any ſin, for Chriſt gave himſelf for you, that he might redeem you from all iniquity; and 'tis the *Law of your Freedom*, That you muſt live to him that freed you, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. and if you be freed by him, ſo you will, Rom. 6. 18. *Being then made free from ſin, ye became the ſervants righteouſneſs.* Verſ. 22. *But now being made free from ſin, and become ſervants to God, ye have your fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life.* And remember this, that if a perſon can hear never ſo much, or think never ſo much, or profeſſes never ſo much, or know never ſo much of this Redemption by Chriſt, and it be not a *purifying* thing to him, he is not a partaker of it.

12. Laſtly, This Freedom is of excellent uſe to *fit us for Death.* Beloved, we muſt all dye, and therefore we ſhould all labour to be fit to dye: 'Tis a bleſſed thing to be fit for death; for if we be fit to dye, we

are

are fit to live; nay, if we be fit for Death, we are fit for Judgment, and fit for Heaven. Now the queſtion is, How one ſhould be fit to dye? Why certainly, you can take no way to be fit for it, but by getting into this Freedom by Chriſt. I confeſs a man is not preſently fit for death, by the having of it; therefore there is ordinarily ſomething that muſt be between Converſion and Salvation; therefore there muſt be a growing up, and a ripening by further degrees of Sanctification; but yet upon the very entrance into this Freedom there's the foundation of a fitneſs for death laid; and if ſuch a perſon ſhould dye preſently, he would be happy for ever. But you that are out of Chriſt, you are not in the leaſt forwardneſs for death; there's nothing at all done towards it; and therefore, if God ſhould but ſtop your breath (as you don't know how ſoon he may), you'l be found altogether unprepared, and everlaſting miſery will be your portion. But now the people of God, tho they have not all as yet that is requiſite to make them fully ready to be gone out of the World: Yet by their very *being* in the ſtate of this Freedom, they are ſo fit for Death, as that their Death ſhall be

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be in mercy to them, let it come never ſo ſoon; and they are ſo fit for Heaven, as that to be ſure they ſhall not miſs of it, *Col* 1. 12, 13, 14.

And ſo, now you ſee what excellent Uſes may be made of this Freedom, and thereupon what an excellent Freedom this muſt needs be. Now you that are in it, I beſeech you, put your Freedom to theſe good Uſes which I have ſet before you; let it teach you to pitty poor ſinners to get more underſtanding in the Goſpel; let it endear Chriſt to you, let it comfort your hearts, let it make the ways of God ſweet to you, and you uſeful. Prize the Saints, let it ſtrengthen your faith; be enriched by it in all goodneſs; let it make you very humble, and engage you to Chriſt in the ſtricteſt obedience, and to be ready againſt your Lord ſhall come.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

*Concerning the many wonders that may be observed in this Freedom.*

THE Seventh and Laſt thing, to ſet out the excellency of this Freedom, is to ſpeak ſomething of the *many Wonders* that may be obſerved in it. Beloved, if ever there were any thing to be wondered at, ſince the beginning of the World, this Freedom is to be wondered at; there's enough in it to amaze and aſtoniſh every beholder: You know people are mightily taken with ſeeing of rare ſights, and the hearing of ſtrange news; but never did any thing preſent you with ſuch rare ſights, nor bring ſuch ſtrange news to your ears, as this Freedom doth. The whole ſtory of it is wonderful from firſt to laſt; it begins in Wonders, and goes on in Wonders, and is finiſhed in Wonders. The Freedom that God gave his people from other Bondages, for their worldly condition, were attended and accompanied with great Wonders; ſo 'twas when he brought them

them out of *Egypt*, God was a Wonder-working God at that time; *I will ſmite Egypt*, ſaith he, *with all my wonders*. When he came to deliver *Iſrael*, every one of the ten Plagues were *Wonders*, the drying up of the Red-Sea, the cauſing of his people to paſs through the midſt of it, the drowning of all their Enemies by the returning of the Waters upon them; they were great and marvellous works; and ſo 'twas when he brought them out of the captivity in *Babylon*: he did ſuch ſtrange and great things then, that his people were *like to them that dreamed*, Pſal. 126. 1. they were great things in the eyes of their very Enemies, as well as in their own eyes, *verſ.* 2, 3. But now this ſame ſpiritual Freedom, is the *Wonder of Wonders*. I might obſerve to you, how that in many places of the Scripture, where this Freedom is ſpoken of, 'tis brought in with this word *behold*, that's put before it, as who ſhould ſay, do you mind what a *Wonder* here is? Can you paſs it by without admiration? ſee it in *Iſa.* 7. 14. *chap.* 28. 16. *chap.* 42. 1. *Jer.* 23. 5, 6. *Zech.* 9. 9. *Luk.* 2. 10. *Joh.* 1. 29. 1 *Joh.* 3. 1. and in *Iſa.* 9. 6. When Chriſt is prophecied of that he ſhould come into the World for the

the giving of this Freedom, amongſt all his other names, this is one, and the firſt that is mentioned, that he ſhould be *wonderful*. But now, to come to Particulars, If I ſhould inſiſt upon all the Wonders belonging to this Freedom, I ſhould be too large; and indeed the Subject that I am upon, doth not require any more, than that I ſhould ſpeak ſo far of the Wonders in it, as may ſerve to ſet out the excellency of this Freedom. And therfore, I do willingly omit the Wonders that may be obſerved in the Incarnation, Conception, Birth, Life, Death, Reſurection, and Aſſention of Chriſt; and ſhall only lay before you ſuch Wonders, as by which you may ſee, as I ſaid, that this is an excellent Freedom. I will mention ten of them.

1. What a *Wonder* is this, That *the greateſt loſs ſhould be turned into the greateſt gain!* 'tis ſo by this Freedom, it brings Saints the beſt eſtate that ever they were in, out of the worſt eſtate that ever they were in. 'Twas never ſo low with them, as it 'twas by the Fall of man; 'twas never ſo high with them, as it is by this Freedom by Chriſt, by which they are recovered from that. *Paul* ſaith Phil. 3. 7. That *the things*

*things that were gain to him, became loss for Christ*; and they who are the Children of God may also say, that *the things that were loss to them, are become gain by Christ.* Oh how have they gained by the fall! And yet, beloved, we must not rejoyce in the fall, while we look barely upon that. No: 'tis matter of heart-breaking sorrow, to think that ever *Adam*, and the World in him, sinned away their innocency, as they did; and 'twill be matter of everlasting mourning to many millions in Hell, that *Adam* did not abide in that honour which God gave him at the first; but we may, and we must rejoyce in Christ, who turns even this great evil to the great good of all that believe in him; to them it is according to *Sampsons* riddle, *Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.* If ever there were a blessed loss, this was it, considering how God took occasion from it to magnifie the riches of his Grace in his Son. This Wonder you have set forth in *Rom.* 5. 17, 18, 19. where he speaks how we were ruined in the first *Adam*, and raised in the second.

2. That *every sin that a man hath committed, should be damnable, and yet that all the sins*

*ſins that he hath committed, ſhall not damn him.* Certainly, there muſt be ſome wonderful way found out to bring this to paſs; why, now this Freedom by Chriſt doth it. 'Tis the nature of every ſin, to deſerve Hell, not only the evils and miſeries of this preſent life, but alſo everlaſting wrath in the World to come; and who ever is not made free by Chriſt, ſhall find that every ſin is a deadly ſin, and that 'tis not a *Purgatory* ſhall ſerve their turn, to cleanſe them from the leaſt tranſgreſſion. Oh, what a curſed practiſe is this of the *Papiſts*, to harden ſinners hearts thus, as if ſome ſins were of ſuch a ſmall guilt, and of ſuch a *venial* nature, as if Hell were a place of too great torment for them; but we ſay as *Paul* in another caſe, *Nay, O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God?* Doth not this word ſay, that *death is the wages of ſin*, Rom. 6. ult. of ſin, as 'tis ſin, and by *death* there is meant, that which is in oppoſition to *eternal life*. But now, this Freedom makes innumerable damnable ſins not to damn; would you not count it a wonderful thing, if there ſhould be ſuch a thing as were able to quench unquenchable fire? Why this Freedom does it, for thoſe that have it; it puts out the

Fire

Fire of Hell to them. Beloved, if you would imagine that one that hath this Freedom were to walk in the flames of Hell, they would not hurt him, they would all part, and give wey, as who ſhould ſay, this is one that we muſt not faſten upon; as the Children of *Iſrael* paſt through the Red-Sea, that dreadful gulf; and all the waters fell back as if they were frighted at them; why, they were the people, who were under Gods redeeming love, therefore they were not drowned, no, not ſo much as wetted. So if thoſe who have obtained, through faith, a part in this Freedom, were to paſs to Heaven through Hell, it would be with them, as it were with the *three Children*, when they were caſt into the burning fiery furnance, *Dan.* 3. 28, 29.

3. That *the higheſt mercy ſhould be reconciled to the ſtricteſt juſtice.* It would have poſed any but a God to tell what to ſay to this, which way to ſhew the greateſt ſeverity againſt ſin, and yet to ſhew the greateſt mercy to the ſinner; but by this Freedom this is done. Mercy doth not fall out with Juſtice for being ſo terrible; and Juſtice doth not fall out with Mercy for being ſo favourable; but both

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are well pleased in what is done, and so well pleased with one another, that as *David's* expression is, they can *kiss each other*, as most intimate loving Friends. Gods Attributes, as I may speak with reverence, did never seem to be so near a falling out, as when the Covenant of Works was broken by our first Parents. Mercy lookt as if it would fain have pittied us; but Justice looked as if it would by no means let it; these two, they were (only by way of allusion to it) like the Twins in *Rebekahs* Womb, that strugled together, *Gen.* 25. 22. And one did not prevail over the other, like two Armies when they fight, and one puts the other to the worst, and so gets the Victory; but a sweet peace and harmony was kept between them, by the intended Freedom that should be by Christ. Take notice by the way, what a dreadful breach sin made in our first Apostacy, in that it did not only make us to fall out with God, but also as much as lay in us, to give an occasion (if it had been possible) for God to fall out with himself, to set Attribute against Attribute, Mercy against Justice, and Justice against Mercy; but now by this Freedom all is quiet and well enough on

both sides, as the Apostle saith, when he is speaking of it, in Gal. 3. 21. *Is the law then against the promise? God forbid.*

4. That *one that hath but a little grace, should be looked upon as one that hath no sin.* What a Wonder is this! you have not one Child of God, but is very ready to confess that he hath but a *little grace*; yea, you'l say that's their holy modesty and humilty; it may be 'tis not so indeed. I grant it is so in some, that they have much more of God and Christ in them, then they desire to speak of; and the more grace any one hath, the more apt, I think, they are to bewail their own vileness; and in this case we must not take every Child of God just at their word; but we may tell some of them, Come, blessed be God, you are better than you will acknowledg. But really beloved, there be some in Christ that have but a very little Grace; some I know they have, and they must have. It is inconsistent with being truly in Christ, to have no grace at all; but there are some of them that are but new-born Babes; their Grace is but like the *bruised reed*, and the *smoaking flax*; they be for their Souls as *Zacheus* was for his Body, of whom 'tis said, that he was

*little of ſtature*, *Luk.* 19. 3. Now you may think, that certainly they who have ſo little Grace, muſt needs be counted by God to be perſons that have a great deal of ſin; but in reſpect of their juſtification by Chriſt, who hath made them free, it is not ſo. Obſerve 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.* As if he ſhould ſay, Oh, Friends, you have a deal of filthineſs yet to be got out of you, both as to your outward converſation, and as to your inward frame; and you are very imperfect and ſhort in point of holineſs and grace; and yet he had told them before, *cap.* 5. 21. that being in Chriſt, they were made, or reckoned and counted ſuch as had no leſs a righteouſneſs than the righteouſneſs of God.

5. That *the eyes of one ſhould be opened, that was born blind*: this is ſuch a Wonder that you read in *Joh.* 9. 32. that *ſince the World began, 'twas not heard that ever any man did it*; but this is done in this Freedom; they who have it, were *born blind*, as blind as Moles, and ſo continued in reſpect of ſpiritual ſight, till Chriſt had made them free; and then, as it is ſaid of *Saul*, *immediately* there fell from their eyes, as it had

been ſcales, and they received ſight *forthwith.* This ſame Freedom by Chriſt, is that *eye ſalve*, which you read of *Rev.* 3. 18. If any hath but the eyes of his underſtanding anointed with it, it will make him ſee that he never ſaw, 'twill make him *behold wondrous things out of Gods law*; things that he paſt by, and took no more notice of, than a blind man doth of the beautifulleſt ſight that ever was ſeen.

6. That *a man that is poſſeſſed by the Devil, ſhould have the Devil caſt out of him.* Would you not count it a wonderful thing to ſee *a man that had been poſſeſſed with the Devil, and he his now caſt out?* If any ſhould tell you, when you are in the ſtreets, There goes a man that a little while ago the Devil ſpoke in him, and dwelt in him as a man doth in his own houſe, where he counts himſelf at home; how would you look upon, and marvel to ſee ſuch a man! Well, this Freedom is ſuch a thing that it *caſts out Devils: Mary Magdalen* that was brought into it, had *ſeven Devils caſt out of her*: what is the heart of men by nature, but an habition of Devils? 'tis not an expreſſion that at all deſerves to be thought much on, to ſay,

ſay, concerning wicked men, That *the Devil is in them*, the Scripture it ſelf ſaies ſo, *Eph.* 2. 2. and the Devil was in *Judas*, Satan entred into him; and where the Devil is, there he will be, he will keep his hold till this Freedom comes, and then let him look to himſelf; he ſhall be caſt out, tho he hath legions with him. 'Tis obſervable there in *Luk.* 10. how the *ſeventy* Diſciples whom Chriſt had ſent out to Preach this Freedom, *returned with joy* to ſee what work the Goſpel made with the powers of darkneſs; *Lord*, ſay they, *even the Devils are ſubject to us through thy name*, verſ. 17. And mark what Chriſt ſaies again, verſ. 18. *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven.* As if he ſhould ſay, I foreſaw this, when I ſent you out, that it would be ſo; I knew that he would come down as ſwift as the lightning Beloved, this Freedom makes ſinners *vomit up Devils* where it comes; what a wonderful thing is this!

7. That *the dead ſhould be raiſed*; would you not Wonder to ſee a man raiſed from the dead? If ſo be that any of you ſhould ſtand in a Church-yard, and while you are looking upon a grave, and think of the perſon that lies dead and buried there,

and how many years ago it is since he died, and that now he were rotten and consumed; to see him come forth, and stand up, and live? Why now, such a marvellous work is done by this Freedom, it hath spiritually opened the graves of many thousand Souls, and blessed be God we are not without some such that live and walk amongst us at this day, and that are with us in this Congregation. Beloved, do but turn your eyes now, and look upon such a man, and such a woman that fears God, and you have this wonderful sight before you; concerning whom it may be said, as in *Eph.* 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned, who were dead in trespasses and sins.* By this Freedom God shews Wonders to the dead, the dead arise and praise him. Psal. 88. 10, 11, 12. *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah. Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?* Why yes; God doth so in this case that I am upon. And therefore, if you that have any Relations, any Children, any Friends, that are for the condition of their Souls,

stark

ſtark dead, you cannot perceive the leaſt motion or breathing in them towards God, or any thing that is good: Why 'tis true, indeed, if you be ſpiritually alive your ſelves, you can't but do that which perſons uſe to do for their Friends that are dead; you cannot but mourn for them, and in this ſenſe you may, and you muſt do that which would be a great ſin in another ſenſe, you may pray for the dead, and you may be ſtirred up to it, by the conſideration of the wonderful nature of this Freedom, that it is a thing that will put *life* into the *dead*. You may look upon a wicked Child or Relation, it may be ſo far gone in ſin, that they are even paſt hope, as we uſe to do upon people when they are dead; oh, as long as they were alive, tho very ſick, yet while there's life there is hope, as we uſe to ſay; but when we ſee they are *dead*, then hope is gone. Yea, but as to this I am ſpeaking of, how know you but Chriſt may come to the grave of that dead Soul, and raiſe it, as he did to *Lazarus*? So beloved, we that are Miniſters of Chriſt, we preach of this Freedom to you, and as to divers of you we are afraid we preach to the *dead*: and one would think, Why then, what hope is

there? were it not as good to give over? Oh no! Preach we muſt, for all this, in hope that you may live; we are ſure that if God pleaſe to give you this Freedom, tho you have it not yet, when it comes, it ſhall do *Wonders* in you, 'twill fetch you out of your graves. Our Preaching to ſinners, 'tis like *Ezekiels* prophecying to the dry bones, *cap.* 37. God brought him and ſet him down in the midſt of a Valley full of them, *verſ.* 1, 2. and when he had been viewing them well, and ſeen what a ſad Spectacle there was; now, *Son of man, can theſe bones live*, ſaith he? doſt think 'tis poſſible that ever they ſhould live? And he anſwered, *O Lord God thou knoweſt.* As if he ſhould ſay, O Lord, that's with thee; who can reſolve that, but thy ſelf? *verſe.* 3. Well, in *verſ.* 4. Come, do thou prophecy upon them, ſaith God, and keep on prophecying, and ſee what I will do by it. Now, *verſ.* 7. the Prophet *propheſied as he was commanded.* As if he ſhould ſay, That i did, and that was all that I could do; but mark what wonderful ſucceſs here was, ſee *verſ.* 7, 8, 9, 10. and you read in *verſ.* 10. that *they lived*, &c. The Lord bleſs our preaching, as he bleſſed *Ezekiels* prophecying here.

8. That

8. That *Death it ſelf ſhould be killed.* Is not this a ſtrange thing? You know what a killing thing Death is; you have heard of many, and ſeen many that have been ſlain by it, it is a killing all over the World: Whether you conſider Death naturally or ſpiritually, what a great deſtroyer 'tis! But now, that there ſhould be ſomething that ſhould cauſe Death it ſelf to dye; would not this be a wonder? why this Freedom doth it, it kills the bodily death by the Reſurrection of the body; it kills the ſpiritual Death, by their being riſen with Chriſt; it kills the eternal Death, by giving them eternal Life. You have two Verſes in Joh. 11. 25, 26. that ſpeak to this, ſays our Saviour there, *I am the reſurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet ſhall he live; And whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me, ſhall never dye.* See alſo 1 *Cor.* 15. 54, 55, 56, 57. *So when this corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption, and this mortal ſhall have put on immortality, then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

9. That

9. That *a man ſhould be made able to do all things.* Would you not Wonder to ſee a man that is ſo able? It may be you will not believe that there is any ſuch man in the World: Nay, that if he could do all things, he would not be a man; and 'tis true, if you take [*all things*] in the largeſt ſenſe; he cannot do all things that God can do; but he can do all things through God, that *he* hath to do, *Phil.* 4. 11. A true Chriſtian is in ſome ſenſe *weak*, and yet *ſtrong*, as *Paul* ſaith, *When I am weak, then am I ſtrong*, 2 Cor. 12. 10. And ſays our Saviour to the man that brought to him his Son poſſeſſed with a Devil, beſeeching him to help him, *Mark* 9. 23 *If thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible to him that believeth.* As if he ſhould ſay, Art thou got into Freedom? if ſo, there's nothing that thou haſt to do, but thou maiſt go through with it by faith in me. A man that hath this Freedom, and improves it as he ſhould do, he can be poor, he can be rich, he can do, and he can ſuffer, he can live, and he can dye, he can love his Enemies, he can gain by loſſes, he can prevail with God, *&c.*

10. That *a poor creature ſhould come to know what thoughts God had of him before the*

*the World began, and what he intends to do with him to all eternity.* Why many will be ready to ſay, how is it ever poſſible that ſuch a thing ſhould be? Why, now 'tis one of the Wonders of this Freedom, that by the having of it a man may come to know this; if you look backward *from* all eternity, he may be ſure that God hath choſen him; if you look forward *to* all eternity, he may be ſure that God will receive him into Glory. See how *Paul* ſpeaks about this, 1 Theſ. 5. 9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Many there be, who are in this Freedom, that are aſſured of this, and ſuch as are in it, tho they be not ſure as yet of it, yet they are in the way to it.

You ſee ſomething of the Wonders of this Freedom; and now is it not an excellent Freedom alſo upon this account? I will only add this, That the Scripture holds forth to us, that Gods wonderful works muſt have five Duties performed about them, and ſo muſt this wonderful Freedom. (1.) They muſt be talked of, *Pſal.* 105. 2. So now, oh ſpeak of this *wonderful Freedom* one to another, as you ſit in the houſe, and as you walk by the way; declare

declare what God hath done for his people by Jesus Christ. (2.) They must be *considered*, pondered upon, *Joh.* 37. 13. So this wonderful Freedom you must *observe* the Wonders in it, have deep and serious thoughts of it; Search into it by Meditation; Mysteries cannot be understood by a superficial looking upon them, but they must be dived into. (3.) They must be *remembred*, *Psal.* 105. 4, 6. So take heed of forgetting this wonderful Freedom; 'tis a mercy never to be forgotten. (4.) God must be *praised* for them; yea, praised and praised again, *Psal.* 136. 1, 2, 3, 4. So highly bless God for this wonderful Freedom; see in two *Psalms* which are made about it, *Psal.* 72. and he closes up all with this; *vers.* 18, 19. *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen.* And *Psal.* 98. read the whole *Psalm.* (5.) They must be *believed*, *Psal.* 78. 32. So you must believe this report about this wonderful Freedom; you must close with it by faith, you must not continue in your sins, as if all this were a *lye* that we tell about Salvation by

by Christ. I will end this Seventh thing of the Wonders of this Freedom, with that Scripture, Acts 13. 38, to 42. *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, tho a man declare it unto you.* Do you *Wonder* at the things you have heard? Oh! take heed that you don't *Wonder and perish* for want of believing of them.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XII.

### *The Application of this fifth Branch of the Doctrine.*

AND now, is this *Freedom of Christ such an excellent Freedom*, as you have heard it is? Then I shall finish this fifth Branch, and so this whole Text with seven Uses.

1. *Of Information.* 2. *of Admiration.* 3. *of Lamentation.* 4. *of Examination.* 5. *of Expostulation.* 6. *of Exhortation.* 7. *of Consolation.*

Use I. Of *Information.* It informs of four things.

1. *That the remedy that is prepared for sinners misery, is beyond all exception*; their misery is their Bondage by sin, their remedy is Freedom by Christ, and 'tis beyond all exception, for 'tis *excellent Freedom.* The Lord Jesus cares not who looks upon his redeeming-work, 'tis done so well,

well, it wants nothing to make it sufficient and all-sufficient for the ends and purposes to which it was intended: we are sure therefore, that if we can but use this soveraign Plaister as we ought, it will without question heal our wound. There is that in Christ, that will do our work; do but make trial, and you'l find 'tis true; for in this case trial is all in all. Christ desires to be put to the proof, whether he cannot do all things for a poor Soul that it hath need should be done for it. If you'l but venture your Souls, he will venture his Salvation; what would you desire more to manifest that a receit for a disease is the best that can be got, than that every one that hath made use of it, should give their approving-testimony, that they have been cured by it: Now this is the witness that all believers will give of Christ. If you should go up and down for their hands, they will be all ready to sign and seal to the great cures that they have by him, *Isa.* 53. 5. 'tis as it were the general voice of all that have made use of Christ; *We are healed.* Again, it informs us,

2. That

2. That *there is something that is much better than that which the men of the World do spend their time and thoughts about.* The truth is, they follow this World, as if it were the best thing that ever was, or ever shall be. But, ah Sirs, you (whose life and labour is thus laid out) are mistaken. There is an excellent Freedom by Christ, that is better than all that you cark and care, and rap and rend for. Would I could but tell what to say to you, to bring you out of love with this World: you that are so much in love with it, What do you see or find in it, that you should set your hearts upon it? you run *after* that, and that runs *from* you, and that so fast, that some of you cannot overtake it for your lives. I may say, that the World looks upon some persons, as if it were *afraid to come* near them; they would fain lay hands upon it, and God wont let them; he bids the things of this World run away from them, and this surely is in much mercy to some, for God sees that if they should gain the World, they would lose their Souls; and if he bears a love to them, he had rather they should miss of Earth than Heaven. Well, but it may be God suffers some of you to overtake

vertake this World, you make ſuch haſte after it, and when you have got it, what have you got? I don't ſpeak to leſſen thankfulneſs for any of theſe outward mercies; but my drift is to ſet the World in its place, and this Freedom in its place; but what have you gotten? Why, I will caſt it up for you, and the whole ſum amounts to this, You have got that, that you muſt loſe, all this getting 'tis in order to loſing; you have it, but you cannot hold it; when you have got the World, you have got Vanity, you have got vexation of ſpirit, *Eccl.* 1. 2. and will you ſpend your whole time and thoughts for this? I will throw ſome Scripture-Water upon the Fire of this Love to the World, to ſee if it will put it out. Conſider ſeriouſly theſe three Text, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. *Jam.* 4. 4. *Luk.* 12. 20, 21. Again, this imforms us,

3. That *this Freedom by Chriſt is highly worth the pains that any Soul which hath it, hath taken to obtain it, or that any Soul is now taking to get it*; oh, it will quit the coſt, and bear the charges, for 'tis excellent Freedom. It is a great encouragement to a man to lay out his labour upon a thing,

when he is ſure he ſhall not loſe his labour; convince him that he ſhall be a gainer, and a great gainer, and you have done enough to ſet him a work. If you had but told him of a probability, and a hope of advantage, you ſhould have ſeen him ſtir; but if he can be ſure that it will be a profitable buſineſs, he thinks long ere he is at it. Now I aſſure you, from the ſure word of God, That take what pains you will to get this Freedom, it ſhall be like that ſeed, that was ſown in the ground, it will be encreaſed thirty, ſixty, yea an hundredfold; you'l find it the beſt employment that ever you were about; there never was any Child of God that wiſhed, Would I had not medled with this Freedom by Chriſt, nor ever will; Chriſt ſcorns that any that trade with him, ſhould be loſers. As they ſhall not want for work, ſo they ſhall not want for wages. 'Tis true, he doth expect that they who will have his Freedom, ſhould take great pains for it, but he will graciouſly reward their great pains with great gains. If they will ſell all that they have, to get the Pearl, they ſhall find that the Pearl, when they have it, is a *Pearl of great price.*

price. I would put you in mind here of ſome Verſes in the 2. and 3. chapters of *Rev.* which I would allude to; read *cap.* 2. 7. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midſt of the paradice of God.* Verſ. 11. *He that overcometh, ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death.* Verſ. 17. *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hiden manna, and will give him a white-ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name written, which no man knoweth ſaving he that receiveth it.* And chap. 3. v. 5. *He that overcometh, the ſame ſhall be cloathed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confeſs his name before my Father, and before his angels.* Verſ. 12. *Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jeruſalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.* Verſ. 21. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his throne.* That which I ſay to you from hence, is this;

There are difficulties, and great difficulties in the way of obtaining this Freedom, but will you not be daunted at them? but labour so as to overcome? will you resolve through the help of God, let there be what pain there will, I'll overcome them? Why then, you see how every verse that I have read to you, carries its gains with it. Again, this informs us,

4. That *the people of God are an excellent people*; they must needs be so, for they are gotten into this excellent Freedom. This is the company, that no company in the World can compare with. I know that the people of God don't desire to commend or speak honourably of themselves. But beloved, I have here a very fair occasion to commend them to you; very like some of you, may have low and mean thoughts of them, and the rather, because you see them so contemptible in their outward appearance; it may be some of your cloathes are better than theirs, and some of your estates are greater than theirs, and some of your food is finer than theirs, and some of your kindred may be richer than theirs: Well, I grant this may be true one way; but I am sure if you be

out

out of Christ, 'tis false another way. Be you what you will in wordly respects, upon the account of the condition that this excellent Freedom hath brought them into, you that are out of Christ, never wore such *cloathes* as they do, for they have put on the new man, the Lord Jesus Christ, and they go every day of the week in robes, see *Rev.* 7. 9, 13, 14, 15. And for *Estate*, that which you have in the World, is nothing to what they have in Christ, for they are *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*, Rom. 8. 17. and the *Promises* are theirs, and the *Kingdom of Heaven* is theirs, and *all things* are theirs; and for *food*, you never in all your lives tasted any thing so sweet, as that which they feed upon; they eat of the *bread which came down from God*, they *eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of man*; whose *flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed*: and for *kindred*, why all your carnal Relations are no better than beggars in comparison of them, that they are a kin to; *Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren*, Heb. 2. 11. And *God is not ashamed to be called their God*, cap. 11. 16. Obj. *Why, then sure if they have all this excellency by their Free-*

*dom, their Freedom will make them proud Ans.* No beloved, for all this, they were never so humble, and never had such mean thoughts of themselves, as *since* they got into this Freedom; they never loathed themselves till now; they were more lifted up in their misery, than now they are in their excellency. Now they desire to give God all the Glory, and to take nothing to themselves but shame; tho God hath made them *great*, yet they do not count themselves *good*, *Rom.* 7. 18.

*Use* 2. Of *Admiration.* That ever such an excellent Freedom should be bestowed upon the Sons of men. There are two things in this that may raise our Admiration.

1. That ever it should be given to *men*; that the Lord should pass by Angels with a purpose never to recover them when they were fallen, and that we should be those to whom he would send redemption. He might have let us all alone: Angels to perish, and mankind to perish; and if he would have saved any, he might have bid his Son go take the nature of Angels, and redeem

deem the Devils, ( but that it would not conſiſt with his everlaſting purpoſe) and have left *Adam* and all his poſterity under the curſe; but that he ſhould pitch upon us, to be the ſubjects that ſhould be capable of this Freedom, how is free Grace to be admired! that God ſhould overlook thoſe that ſtood nearer to him by their creation, then we did, to look upon *us*! The ſpirits of darkneſs are left in diſpair, while we are under hope; they and we were all miſerable creatures by the fall, firſt of one, and then of the other; but their miſery was irrecoverable, ours is a recoverable miſery, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. God hath an Election amongſt us, but he hath none among the Devils; and therefore, the door of mercy is ſhut againſt them, never to be opened, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. *Jude verſ.* 6. Oh, how are we beholding to God, that he would reſerve Mercy for us, when he reſerves Wrath for the fallen Angels! there he made quick work; they fell into Condemnation, and God *ſealed* up their Condemnation; there is not ſo much as a poſſibility that God will ever be reconciled to them; but with us he was willing to renew a better Covenant than that was which we brake; there

is pity, and pardon, and peace for *us* in Christ. Now have not we cause to admire this, and to say, as Heb. 2. 6. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?*

2. That not only men, but some of the *worst of men*, should have the benefit of this Freedom. I mean, not only a temporal benefit, for so all have; but the saving everlasting benefit of it. You read in the Scripture, of some of the very worst of men, that have been made free by Christ. When this Freedom came to them at first, it found some of them amongst the *Thieves*, and others amongst the *Drunkards*, and others amongst the *Whoremongers*, and others amongst the *Idolaters*, as it did the *Corinthians*; and others amongst the *Persecutors*, and the *Blasphemers*, as it did *Paul*; and others amongst the *Crucifiers* of Christ, as it did the *Jews*; and have you not heard sometimes of some notorious sinner or other that became a new man, and through grace was afterwards as much for God, as before he was the for Devil? that to ones thinking was come even to the height of wickedness, and yet brought home? Beloved, God will have this Freedom by Christ,

Christ, and the exceeding riches of it, glorified even in this World; and therefore he gives it sometimes to the very dregs of sinners. And who indeed is there of those, that have obtained a fellowship in this great Salvation, but hath cause to admire that ever it should be given to him? And to say, Oh! God had mercy upon a grievous sinner, when he had mercy upon *me*. It is certain that the loving-kindness of God in Jesus Christ, will be admired by every Soul, upon whom it lights; and such a one is ready to think, That never was there any sinner that did more need mercy, or less deserve it: and the Reason of this is, because where this Freedom comes, it works such a sense of ones vileness upon the heart, that tho indeed there may in some respects be greater sinners than ones self; yet one cannot but look upon ones self as one of the greatest Wonders of Mercy that ever was, as *Paul* did, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15, 16. And when God shall have gathered all his Children to glory: Oh beloved, what a wonderful company there will be; I don't mean so much for multitude, tho that will be innumerable, as to think what sinners these were, and especially, some of them

them. Oh! the ſtories that might be told of them in Heaven, to raiſe matter of everlaſting Admiration, that one who had been formerly ſuch a grievous ſinner on Earth, ſhould prove notwithſtanding a glorious Saint in Heaven. Oh wonderful!

*Uſe* 3. Is this Freedom by Chriſt ſuch an excellent Freedom? then here is ſomething for *Lamentation* and Mourning. Beloved, we have often through Gods Mercy met together: Oh! that we could now mourn together. And you that cannot weep with your eyes, oh, that you would mourn in your hearts. Why, but you may ſay, What is there here to mourn for? This excellent Freedom is cauſe of rejoycing? Yea indeed, ſo 'tis, 'tis glad tidings of great joy, if all things about it were well with us; but alas, the Lord knows they are not. I pray therefore, conſider four things, for the piercing of your hearts in this Uſe of *Lamentation.*

1. *That ever we ſhould be the cauſe of pulling the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* who purchaſed

chaſed this Freedom for us, *to ſo much pain and grief*, as he underwent in the doing of it. Oh! what bitter mourning ſhould we make for our ſins, that laid ſuch a load upon Chriſt; that we could never have had this excellent Freedom, if he had not ſuffered beyond expreſſion. We may ſay, thoſe of us that are made free by Chriſt, he hath put us into a good condition; but oh, into what a bad condition did our ſins put him! he hath brought us joy, but we brought him ſorrow; he hath brought us reſt, but we brought him travel of Soul; he hath brought us life, but we brought him death; he hath brought us bleſſing, but we brought him a curſe; he helped us to a great deal of Mercy, but we helped him to a great deal of miſery: in reſpect of his ſufferings he was the miſerableſt man that ever lived. Now friends, this was your ſins, and my ſins, that brought him to this, that made Jeſus Chriſt to have a very Hell upon Earth; and ſhall we not mourn for this? Oh! that the Lord would perform that promiſe to us this day, *Zech.* 12. 10. *And I will pour upon the houſe of David,*

and

*and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, a ſpirit of grace and of ſupplications, and they ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt born.*

2. *That God hath no more Glory from us, for all this grace that he hath beſtowed upon us.* This Freedom is actually given to ſome of us; and thoſe Scriptures through the tender Mercy of God may be applied, I doubt not, to ſome of you, *Col.* 1. 21. *Gal.* 4. 13. *Eph.* 2. 13, 19. But will you not ſay your ſelves, (I know you will) that you do fall exceeding ſhort of ſuch a walking, as this excellent Freedom engages you to? Beloved, I am glad to ſee any of you that are in Chriſt, ſo good; but truly, the beſt of us have cauſe to mourn that we are no better. Oh, what a people ſhould we be, for whom the Lord Jeſus Chriſt laid down his precious Life, and ſhed his precious Blood! You do God ſome Service, bleſſed be his Name; but ſhould you not do him more? You bring forth ſome fruit, but ſhould you not

not bring forth more? 'Tis not enough for you to be gracious, but you ſhould be zealous. Chriſt, as I may ſo ſpeak, hoped you would, when he gave you this Freedom, ſee Tit. 2. 14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

3. That *ſo many are gone to Hell for refuſing this excellent Freedom.* Oh, what a ſad thing 'tis to think how many Souls have periſhed for want of cloſing with Chriſt! 'Tis true, they had other ſins, but whatever other ſins they had, they would have been forgiven, if they had not neglected this great Salvation; that made them that they could not eſcape. As the receiving of this Freedom by Faith, hath been the Salvation of *many*; ſo the refuſing of it by unbelief, hath been the Damnation of more; tho poor wretches, they are not here to be told of it, becauſe they are now gone to their own place. Oh! the price that they had once in their hands, but now they have loſt it for ever, and it may be ſome of theſe might be

be your Friends and Relations, the Wives of your own bosoms, and the Children of your own bodies. Well, if they were, they are perished without hope; there's no fetching them back again: you may perhaps mourn to think what is become of them, but now they are past recovery; your prayers can do them no good, and your tears can do them no good; and now you must labour to rest satisfied with this, that the Will of the Lord is done, and that he is glorified, tho it be in their eternal destruction.

4. That *so many sinners, tho they are yet on Earth, will shortly be in Hell too, for the same sin:* For alas! how many be there of those who are yet alive, that are making light of Christ, and of this excellent Freedom, and many of them will go on to do so, to their dying day, and so come to the same pass to which the unrepenting sinners before them have brought themselves. The generations of Christ-refusers is not all gone; they that were in the ages that are past, are swept and snatch away; but there are others that stand up

up in their room; there's a ſucceſſion of theſe ungodly hard-hearted ſinners, that tho we offer Chriſt and Salvation to them, and beſeech them as for our lives to be reconciled to God, yet they go on, and 'tis to be feared will go on in the broad way that leadeth to Deſtruction. 'Twas a ſad word that Chriſt ſpake to them, in Joh. 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* Mark, he doth not ſay, *you do not come*; but he delivers it in a kind of hopeleſs expreſſion, *you will not come.* As if he ſhould ſay, I ſee ſome of you are of that temper, that as you *are*, you *will* be; you *are* in your ſins, and you *will* be in your ſins: let them that hear me, mark it concerning you, if you do not *dye out of me.* I pray God it be not ſo with ſome of you that are here. Really Sirs, 'tis matter of mourning to ſee how ſome of you trifle in the things of your Souls; would it not grieve ones heart to think that ſome of you that have attended upon all this that hath been preached upon this Text, ſhould yet look after a Chriſt no more than you do? I am this day to finiſh this work,

and

and I am afraid of divers of you, that this Text will leave you as dead as it found you. Well, the Lord be witneſs between you and me, whether I have not ſet Life and Death before you, and whether if you periſh, it be for want of being ſufficiently told of the miſery of your Bondage of ſin, or of the excellency of the Freedom by Chriſt. Beloved, 'twill be a ſad thing, when ſuch a Text as this is *done*, to leave any of you *undone*.

*Uſe* 4. Of *Examination*. You have heard much of this excellent Freedom: put this queſtion home to your ſelves, every one of you, *Am I got out of priſon yet?* How ſhall I know that, you'l ſay? *Anſ.* Take it in three things.

1. If a man be got out of Priſon, he hath made his peace with thoſe that caſt him in; ſuppoſe it be for debt that one hath been laid up, and you ſee him afterwards out of priſon; and you ask him, why, you were a priſoner, how got you out? Why, ſaies he, I have compounded with my Creditors, I have made

made my peace, or I have got an able ſurety to be bound for me. So Sirs, have you made your peace with God, for your great debt of ſin? Have you got Jeſus Chriſt to ſtand bound for you? Why then, you are no longer Priſoners; but if you have not peace with God through Chriſt, you are in Priſon ſtill, for the condition of your Souls, ſee Zech. 9. 11. *As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant, I have ſet forth thy priſoners out of the pit, wherein is no water.* God ſends forth none out of *Priſon*, but by the *Blood* of that *Covenant* which Chriſt hath made with God, on the behalf of the *Priſoner* that he will pay the debt for him.

2. Another ſign that a man is got out of Priſon, is, That he bears a great love to him that freed him: If one comes and ſees him lye there in a ſad condition, and hath compaſſion upon him; Well, ſaith he, I'll procure your Freedom for you; I'll undertake it; he will have a great reſpect for that perſon, to be ſure, when he hath done it. Oh! ſaith he, if it had not been for this Friend, I

had perished; I have reason to make much of him. Sir, if you don't prize Christ, you are in Prison still; you have not *his Freedom*, if he hath not your best Love, Col. 1. 13. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.* Mark how those words, his dear Son, are brought in with the mention of this Freedom; and I look upon them as to be understood, not only in reference to his Father, but also those who are freed by him; As if he should say, Dear to his *Father*, and dear to *us* too.

3. If a man be got out of Prison or Bondage, he is afraid to go thither again; he thinks what a sad condition he had when he was there, and he desires he may not come there again: so do you fear and watch, lest any sin bring you into Bondage again. Is there no lust, that you would be any longer a servant to? Do you dread the thoughts of holding secret correspodence with any false way? Why then you are made free. You may say, as

as 'tis in Pſal. 124. 7. *Our ſoul is eſcaped as a bird out of the ſnare of the fowler; the ſnare is broken, and we are eſcaped.* If you be not made free by Chriſt, you will have a darling ſin.

*Uſe* 5. Of *Expoſtulation.* And that with ſuch as are not made free by Chriſt: And here, tho I ſhall ſpeak but few words, yet I wiſh they may be piercing. What mean you, that you don't accept of Chriſts excellent Freedom? 'Tis to be had, and you want it, and you'l be eternally loſt without it, and yet you abide in your Bondage; the ſins you had, you have ſtill; the ſloth that was in you, is in you ſtill. I dont perceive ſome of you ſtir a jot towards the New-birth: I have been endeavouring upon this Text, to hale you to Chriſt, and yet you hang back. Why Sirs, for the Lords ſake, what do you mean? I thought that if any Scripture in the Bible would have woo'd you, this and that which hath been ſaid upon it, would have done it. And now after I have delivered all this meſſage from God to you, will you not

here? I must needs here put you in mind of the Prophets words to *David*; what he said to him, when he had delivered Gods message to him, that I say to you, 2 Sam. 24. 13. Now advise, *and see what an answer I shall return to him that sent me.* You have heard what I have said from Christ to you; now let me hear what I shall say from you to Christ; I must go back to him for a new message (now I have done with this subject); But what, Sirs, shall I answer him, when he asks me what is become of the old; You preached a great while about Freedom that I had to give sinners, how did it speed with your hearers? I should be glad with all my heart, that I might be able to say to Christ of this Text, as they did of the Talents, see *Luk.* 19. 15, 16, 18. Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds, saith one, five pounds, saith another. So that my Text that I have been a trading with for God amongst you, had gained ten Souls, or five Souls, or one Soul, rather then nothing. Well, but what shall I say to him that sent me? I must go to reckon with him for this Text, and as near as

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I can, I muſt give him a faithful account, and that is, that I don't hear of one that is converted by all theſe Sermons; not a Man or Woman of you that were out of Chriſt when I began them, have been with me, to bring me this joyful news, that this Text hath been the word of Life and Power to you. If any ſuch mercy hath been ſhewed to you, 'tis between God and your ſelves: but if it be ſo indeed, methinks you ſhould eaſily conclude, Certainly, Gods beginning to work upon me, under ſuch a mans Miniſtry, muſt needs be welcome newes to him: and therefore, I'll go to him, and tell him what God hath done for my Soul: And Friends, I long to ſee ſome of you to come to my houſe upon ſuch an errand. I know my labour hath not been in vain, (in ſpeaking of this Freedom) to them here, who are in Chriſt Jeſus; but God hath given them many a ſweet refreſhment in the hearing of it; and if there ſhould be none that are brought in, yet, bleſſed be God, that there are ſome that are built up. But oh Sirs, what will become of you, that have neither gotten, nor

are getting this Freedom? Why don't you consider before it be too late, under what Offers of Grace you live; what heart-rending thoughts do you think you shall have a little while hence, when you shall look back upon the opportunities you have lost, without hope of having any more? Will it not be an heavy charge against you, that you have despised a precious Christ, and lost a precious Soul? If you believe that you are sinners, what's the reason that you don't regard a Saviour? Is Christ beholding to you, to accept of his Salvation? or are you beholding to him, that he is so willing you should have it? If you could be contented to live in your sins all your days, can you be contented to suffer for them to all eternity? I tell you, Hell is ready for you, if you will not repent and believe the Gospel; and the more calls you have now, the more Torments you'l have there? Is it fit that such sinful Worms as you are, should take upon you to tell Christ that you wont have him? And do you think that he doth not observe your unkindness, and froward-

frowardness to him, tho for the present he lets you alone? If you have no love for Christ, have you none for your selves? Will this World last always, that you provide no better for another? Do you think that Christ cannot tell what to do with his mercy, because he offers it to you? And now I have blown the Trumpet, and given you warning, because I see the Sword is a coming, now read *Ezek.* 33. the nine first Verses.

*Use* 6. Of *Exhortation.* Take it amongst you in three things, briefly.

1. *Bless the Lord, that you live under the Ministration of such an excellent Freedom.* Oh Sirs, think what a mercy you have, and be thankful. How many be there that want what you enjoy! God hath made the way to Heaven plain before you: You may see by the light that shines amongst you, how fain he would have you saved. You may read those words as your own Priviledge, Luke 1. 78, 79. *Through the tender mercy of God, the day-spring from on high*

*hath visited us; To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.* God might have left you, as he hath many, without the means of Grace; your feet might have stumbled upon the dark Mountains; you might have gone all your lives, and not have heard so much of Christ, as you have heard from this one Text. Oh! that now you could be praising God for his goodness to your Souls. I say no more to you but this, Unthankfulness for the Gospel, endangers the Gospel; they who don't look upon it, as a great mercy, are not like to have such a mercy long.

2. If any of you be looking after Freedom for your Souls; or when ever it shall please God, that any of you shall, (which the Lord grant, may be quickly; for in this case delays are dangerous); *be sure you look after Freedom indeed*: take heed that you be not deceived with a Counterfeit, with the shew and shadow of this Freedom, but that it be that very Freedom which Christ gives to believers. An hypocrite he thinks

thinks he hath this Freedom, but he is in Bondage ſtill; you never have this true Freedom, till your hearts be right in the ſight of God, *Act.* 8. compare *verſ.* 21, 23. together. There be two great fears concerning perſons that are out of Chriſt; the firſt, whether ever they will look after him *at all*, and then, if they do; whether it will be *in Truth.*

3. *Don't abuſe this excellent Freedom*, you that have it. You uſe to ſay, 'tis pity that good things ſhould be abuſed. Now this Freedom by Chriſt, is not only a good thing, but an excellent thing; oh, don't abuſe it then, and if you would not do ſo, ever remember that Exhortation which *Paul* gave the *Theſſalonians*, which I alſo give to you, 1 Theſſ. 2. 12. *That ye would walk worthily of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.* I beſeech you, don't deal *unworthily* with your Freedom, don't walk *unbecomingly* in it; *adorn* the Goſpel now, with a Converſation in Chriſt; 'tis not for you to ſin as others do; you muſt

be

holy; 'tis not for you to sleep as others do, you must watch and be sober; 'tis not for you to mind earthly things, and the foolish fashions of this Generation; for *Christ gave himself for you, that he might deliver you from this present evil World*; 'tis not for you to be carried away with errors in your Judgment, for the *truth hath made you free*; 'tis not for you to enslave your consciences to the wills of men, 'tis against your Freedom, 1 Cor. 7. 23. thus in all things, 'tis your great duty *to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

*Use* 7. Of *Consolation*, to you, who are made free by Christ. I have but two things to say to you by way of *comfort.*

1. *It is better with you now, than it is with any in the World besides your selves.* Is not that a comfort to you? I may say of you, in respect of others, as *Solomon* doth of the vertuous

ons Women. *Then excellest them all.* I remember what *Balaam* said, when he looked upon the Children of *Israel*, whom God had redeemed, Numb. 23. 9. *Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.* And then chap. 24. 5. *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!* As if he should say, O! what a company here is, in comparison of the rest of the World! Beloved, by this excellent Freedom, Christ hath made you high above all the glory of the World. Whereas before you were but as common stones; by this Freedom he hath turned you into Jewels, into a peculiar treasure to God. How can you read that Scripture without rejoycing, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.* Envy not the men of the World for their base enjoyments; you are in a better condition then they are. God hath done more for the least of you, than he hath done for the greatest of them.

2. As it is better with you now than

than it is with any in the World *besides your selves*; so *it shall be better with you shortly, than it is with any of your selves.* Now you are got beyond what others are; but a little while hence you'l be got beyond what your selves are; and is not this matter of great comfort? you know what *Paul* saith, Phil. 1. 23. *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* As if he should say, If I come but there once, I shall be gone a great way, beyond what I am now; and with this these redeemed ones have comforted themselves in the world, 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. and so do you. Your Freedom will ere long bring you to another place; it will hand you into Heaven: you are not brought out of *Egypt*, to die in the Wilderness (as those did, who believed not); but to enter into the rest that remaineth for the people of God; and whatever is here wanting to make you fully happy, shall there be received and enjoyed for ever; and therefore in the faith of this go on to wait (yet a little longer) for the Son of God from Heaven, whom he raised

from

from the dead, *even Jesus which delivered us from the Wrath to come.* And so I have finished this famous Text, through the help which I have received from God, to whom through Christ, be given all the Glory. *Amen.*

R

*FINIS.*